

Art Periodical Culture in Late Imperial Russia (1898–1917)

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Art Periodical Culture in Late Imperial Russia (1898–1917)

Print Modernism in Transition

By

Hanna Chuchvaha



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Cover illustration: Fig. 3.1. I** (Nikolai Feofilaktov - ?). Cover page of *The Golden Fleece (Zolotoe runo)*, no. 1, 1906. Courtesy of the Frick Art Reference library.

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This book is printed on acid-free paper.

To my family



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Acknowledgements

My interest in Russian periodical culture arose in the late 1990s, when I saw the *World of Art* journal for the first time and was impressed with how the body of the periodical differed from what readers would expect today. The paper, yellowed by time, the strange bindings and typefaces, faded art reproductions and vignettes, created a strong awareness of time, history and the fact that the past really existed.

This book is the result of my years of research at the Interdisciplinary Doctoral program in Slavic Studies and Art & Design at the University of Alberta.

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All translations from Russian are mine, unless otherwise indicated. Transliterations of names in the main text are given according to their commonly accepted non-Russian spelling (e.g. Benois and Diaghilev). However, in the bibliography and bibliographic footnote references the same names appear as they would be transliterated from Russian according to the Library of Congress system (e.g. Benua and Diagilev). All other names and in-text quotations that include transliterations from Russian follow the Library of Congress system.

Since there is a discrepancy between the dates printed on the issues of the periodicals and the dates that they were actually issued, in both bibliography and text I provide the dates that appear on the journals' covers (i.e. the *World of Art*, 1899–1904). However, acknowledging that the issues of the periodicals may be published before or after the defined dates, in the introductory notes to the chapters devoted to each periodical, I indicate this inconsistency and comment on that.

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Introduction

In the second half of the nineteenth century, Russia experienced dynamic industrialization that led to dramatic social and cultural changes. The developing economy triggered tremendous urban growth, which created conditions ripe for the rapid expansion of the intellectual and artistic elites. The reading audience was growing, being reinforced by industrialization, continuous improvements to the educational system and extensive urbanization caused by the migration of the peasants to the cities after the emancipation of serfs in 1861. The population of the cities more than doubled between 1897 and 1917 from 12,490,000 to 25,840,000; the largest urban centres were St Petersburg, with about 2,200,000 residents, and Moscow, with 1,700,000 inhabitants, before World War I. It was estimated that by 1913 the total population had reached over 175,000,000, making Imperial Russia the largest state in Europe.¹

More than 45% of the urban population of the Russian Empire was literate by 1897 and literacy rates were steadily increasing among the lower classes.² Urbanization and growing literacy reinforced the production of books and periodicals of various genres with journals and magazines at the centre of the “field of cultural production” (Pierre Bourdieu).³ During the period 1864 to 1880, book and periodical production increased fourfold,⁴ with numerous periodical genres, from narrow professional journals to illustrated popular magazines, satisfying the demand for all kinds of information, from politics and economics to fashion and everyday entertainment reading. The demand for periodicals continued to increase steadily. In 1908, the total number of Russian periodicals (including newspapers) was 2028, and by 1913 their number had reached 2915.⁵

The illustrated press became an important constituent of periodical culture. Designed not only for reading, but also for viewing, illustrated periodicals featured images of various kinds – from illustrations of popular narratives and important events to art reproductions. Long before television, the Internet and

1 Wayne Dowler, *Russia in 1913* (DeKalb: Northern Illinois Press, 2010) 21.

2 A.M. Anfimov and A.P. Korelin, *Rossiiia 1913 god. Statistiko-dokumental'nyi spravochnik* (Sankt-Peterburg: Blitz, 1995) 327.

3 Pierre Bourdieu, “The Field of Cultural Production or: The Economic World Reversed,” Pierre Bourdieu, *The Field of Cultural Production: Essays on Art and Literature* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993) 29–73.

4 B.N. Orlov, *Poligraficheskaia promyshlennost' Moskvy* (Moskva: Iskusstvo, 1953) 176.

5 A.M. Anfimov and A.P. Korelin, *Rossiiia 1913 god. Statistiko-dokumental'nyi spravochnik* (Sankt-Peterburg: Blitz, 1995) 370.

other visual media became the everyday norm, in the late nineteenth century, images from newspapers, magazines, postcards, posters, even from packages, played enormous roles in modern life. They functioned as the visual representations of famous people, popular tales, important locations or events from imperial court life and everyday happenings. Printed in the periodical press, images functioned not only as illustrations to texts, but taken out of textual context, they served as a form of personal enjoyment. Thus, peasants and members of the lower urban classes cut images from periodicals and placed them on the walls besides icons, collected them into folders for entertainment or aesthetic pleasure. The elite audience enjoyed more expensive photographs and art reproductions designed for framing.

The mass production of various images by the periodical press and the printing industry, including packaging, advertisement, posters, etc., was accelerated by modern reproduction processes such as lithography, wood engraving and photography that reached Imperial Russia in the first half of the nineteenth century. By the end of the nineteenth century, these reproduction techniques were constituents of the “age of mechanical reproduction” (Walter Benjamin).⁶ The continuously growing demand for images led to a proliferation of reproduction technologies and to a subsequent reduction of the cost of printing. Initially pricey and barely affordable in the first half of the nineteenth century, mass-produced images of various kinds in the last quarter of the century became markers of the modern era. The reduction of the price of printing, the mushrooming of affordable mass produced and cheap illustrated periodicals, in the last quarter of the nineteenth century, ironically threatened high quality printing and fine press production.

Low quality printing and the dominance of cheap periodical and book publishing was a Europe-wide phenomenon. Interest in reviving high quality printing and book design arose in Great Britain and was closely associated with the Arts and Crafts movement and the name of William Morris (1834–1896), who founded the Kelmscott Press in 1891, a publishing house devoted to producing limited-edition fine printed books.⁷ Morris perceived book design

6 Walter Benjamin, “The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction,” edited and with introduction by Hannah Arendt, Walter Benjamin, *Illuminations* (New York: Schocken Books, 1968) 217–251.

7 See Duncan Robinson, *William Morris, Edward Burne-Jones, and the Kelmscott Chaucer* (New York: Moyer Bell, 1986); William Peterson, *The Kelmscott Press: a History of William Morris's Typographical Adventure* (Oxford: Clarendon Press and New York: Oxford University Press, 1991); Colin Franklin, *Printing and the Mind of Morris: Three Paths to the Kelmscott Press* (Cambridge: Rampant Lion Press, 1986); and others.

as high art, comparable to painting or sculpture, and created books that were presented as art objects. A revival of graphic design was soon adopted by the European art periodical press. The English *Studio* (1893-present, now *Studio International*),⁸ the German *Pan* (1895–1900; 1910–1915),⁹ *Simplicissimus* (1896–1944; 1954–1964)¹⁰ and *Jugend* (1896–1940),¹¹ the French *La Revue*

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- 8 "The Studio": *A Bibliography: the First Fifty Years, 1893–1943*, ed. Bryan Holme (London: Simms and Reed Ltd., 1978); *General Indices to the First Forty-Two Volumes of "The Studio", 1893–1908*, (London: Sims & Reed, 1979).
- 9 Karl H. Salzmann, "Pan. Geschichte einer Zeitschrift," 10 *Imprimatur* (1950/51); Gerhard Bott, *Bildende Kunst 1850–1914: Dokumentation aus Zeitschriften des Jugendstil, Bd.1 und 2 Pan 1895–1900* (Berlin, bearb. von Ingrid Dennerlein, 1970); Gisela Henze, *Der Pan. Geschichte und Profil einer Zeitschrift der Jahrhundertwende*, Dissertation, Freiburg im Breisgau, 1974; Jutta Thamer, *Zwischen Historismus und Jugendstil: zur Ausstattung der Zeitschrift „Pan“ (1895–1900)* (Frankfurt a. M.: Lang, 1980); Maria Rennhofer, *Kunstzeitschriften der Jahrhundertwende in Deutschland und Österreich: 1895–1914* (Wien: C. Brandstaetter, 1987) 36–68; Donatella Germanese, *Pan (1910–1915). Schriftsteller im Kontext einer Zeitschrift* (Würzburg: Königshausen & Neumann, 2000); Anne Schulten, *Eros des Nordens: Rezeption und Vermittlung skandinavischer Kunst im Kontext der Zeitschrift Pan, 1895–1900* (Frankfurt a.M.: Peter Lang, 2009).
- 10 Ann Taylor Allen, *Satire and Society in Wilhelmine Germany: Kladderadatsch & Simplicissimus, 1890–1914* (Lexington, KY: University Press of Kentucky, 1984); Stanley Appelbaum, *Simplicissimus: 180 Satirical Drawings from the Famous German Weekly* (New York: Dover Publications, 1975); Richard Christ, *Simplicissimus, 1896–1914* (Berlin, Rütten & Loening, 1978); Fritz Arnold, comp. and ed., *One Hundred Caricatures from Simplicissimus 1896–1914: Simplicissimus and the Empire II* (Munich: Goethe-Institut, 1987); Fritz Arnold, comp. and ed., *One Hundred Caricatures from Simplicissimus 1918–1933: Simplicissimus and the Weimar Republic* (Munich: Goethe-Institut, 1987).
- 11 Bernhard Zeller, *Wende der Buchkunst; literarisch-künstlerische Zeitschriften aus den Jahren 1895 bis 1900* (Stuttgart: Höhere Fachschule für das Graphische Gewerbe, 1962); Linda Koreska-Hartmann, *Jugendstil – Stil der 'Jugend'. Auf den Spuren eines alten, neuen Stil- und Lebensgefühls* (München: München Deutscher Taschenbuch Verl., 1969); Michael Weisser, *Im Stil der 'Jugend': die Münchner Illustrierte Wochenschrift für Kunst und Leben und ihr Einfluß auf die Stilkunst der Jahrhundertwende* (Frankfurt a.M.: Fricke, 1979); Michael Weisser, *Annoncen aus der Jahrhundertwende: die Kunst der Anzeigenwerbung ; Beispiele aus der Wochenschrift "Jugend" (1896–1926)* (Hannover, Schlütersche Verlagsgesellschaft und Druckerei, 1981); Jürgen Schwarz, *Bildannoncen aus der Jahrhundertwende* (Frankfurt a. M.: Kunstgeschichtliches Institut der Johann Wolfgang Goethe-Universität, 1990); Sabine Hock, *"Ich bin ein Spötter nur, ein loser...": Karl Ettlinger (1882–1939) und seine Mitarbeit bei der Münchner Wochenschrift "Jugend" in der Zeit von 1902 bis zum Beginn des Ersten Weltkriegs*, Dissertation. Nidderau, 1998; Laurence Danguy, *L'ange de la jeunesse: la revue Jugend et le Jugendstil à* (Munich: Universität Konstanz Fachbereich Literaturwissenschaft, Fachbereich Literaturwissenschaft, 2009).

Blanche (1889–1903),¹² the Austrian *Ver Sacrum* (1898–1903)¹³ and others were conceived as art objects and exemplified the idea of exquisite Art Nouveau graphic design and high quality art reproduction. They were devoted to the proposition that all the arts should exist in harmony, a notion that closely evoked Richard Wagner's concept of *Gesamtkunstwerk*. Travellers and subscribers brought these European art periodicals to Russia along with the concepts of the new Modernist periodical culture, creating the preconditions for adopting the Western European print and book design revival.

The pioneer of the new art periodical culture in Russia was the *World of Art* (*Mir Iskusstva*, 1899–1904) with its strong emphasis on fine art reproduction. Modelled on its European counterparts, it was the first Russian art journal that epitomized the revitalization of the tradition of fine publishing and celebrated the periodical as an art object. This journal, and the artistic group associated with the journal's publication, brought periodical design to the level of high art. They promoted cosmopolitanism and Europeanization in Russia and initiated the marketing of contemporary Russian art abroad. The *World of Art* became the foundation for the emergence of *The Golden Fleece* (*Zolotoe runo*, 1906–1909) and *Apollo* (*Apollon*, 1909–1917), which continued the fine press tradition.

In turn-of-the-century Russia radical changes occurred in the visual arts – stage design, painting and the graphic arts – bringing Russian art closer to Western European trends, reinforcing Modernist narratives imported from Europe, and moving Russia toward International European Modernism. Under these conditions, art periodicals – the *World of Art* and its successors *The Golden Fleece* and *Apollo* – were the most appropriate medium for reporting on

12 Bret Waller and Grace Seiberling, *Artists of La Revue blanche: Bonnard, Toulouse-Lautrec, Vallotton, Vuillard: Memorial Art Gallery of the University of Rochester, January 22-April 15, 1984*, Rochester, New York (Rochester, N.Y.: The Gallery, 1984); A.B. Jackson, *La Revue blanche, 1889–1903: origine, influence, bibliographie* (Paris, M.J. Minard, Lettres Modernes, 1960); Paul-Henri Bourrelier, *La revue blanche: une génération dans l'engagement, 1890–1905* (Paris: Fayard, 2007); Georges Bernier, *La revue blanche: Paris in the days of Post-Impressionism and Symbolism: [exhibition held] November 17th through December 1983*, Wildenstein and Co., Inc., New York, New York (New York: Wildenstein and Co., Inc., 1983); Evelyn Nattier-Natanson, *Les amitiés de la Revue blanche et quelques autres* (Vincennes (Seine) Éditions du Donjon, 1959).

13 Christian Michael Nebehay, *Ver Sacrum, 1898–1903* (New York: Rizzoli, 1977); Otto Breicha, et al., *Ver sacrum; neue Hefte für Kunst und Literatur* (Wien, Verlag Jugend & Volk, 1969); Bernhard Zeller, *Wende der Buchkunst; literarisch-künstlerische Zeitschriften aus den Jahren 1895 bis 1900* (Stuttgart: Höhere Fachschule für das Graphische Gewerbe, 1962); Peter Vergo, *Art in Vienna 1898–1918: Klimt, Kokoschka, Schiele, and their Contemporaries* (London: Phaidon, 1975).

groundbreaking European and Russian exhibits, theatrical productions or literary experiments that proclaimed new aesthetic ideas. By bringing European art of the day to Russia, art journals extended the borders of the Russian artistic imagination and created the conditions for Russian artists to become marketable in Europe. These periodicals opposed themselves to Academic tastes and the Realism of the Wanderers (*Peredvizhniki*),¹⁴ communicating instead European Modernist and Symbolist art theories and themes.

Addressed to the artistically educated elite and sophisticated reader, the art periodicals became active participants in contemporary artistic culture, delivering art reproductions and art reviews to readers who were distant from art events. These art journals' portability made artistic culture available everywhere and any time. In contrast to the Wanderers' travelling art shows, whose works were accessible only at the exhibiting venue, Modernist art periodicals served as portable "exhibits" of contemporary art from various parts of the world, now available not only in Paris, Munich, Moscow or St Petersburg, but in the provinces of the Russian Empire. In turn, Russian art periodicals also travelled to Europe and influenced European cultures. They were subscribed to, read in the circles or art salons and reviewed in the European art press.¹⁵

This book focuses on the *World of Art*, *The Golden Fleece* and *Apollo*, which became the symbols of the print revival, modernity and Europeanization in Russia. The Russian print revival is associated with the names of designers from St Petersburg, Alexandre Benois, Léon Bakst, Mstislav Dobuzhinskii, Konstantin Somov, Eugene Lanceray and many others who promoted the concept of book and periodical design in late Imperial Russia. They participated in the construction of the appearance of the St Petersburg journals the *World of Art* and *Apollo* and the Moscow periodical *The Golden Fleece* and influenced graphic designers of the younger generation. The Petersburg style dominated contemporary graphic arts.

Moscow and St Petersburg, the two Russian capitals, old and new, were always at the centre of the Russian intellectuals' imagination. Since the debates between Westernizers (*zapadniki*) and Slavophiles (*slavianofily*) in the 1830–1850s, St Petersburg and Moscow represented opposite conceptions of the urban lifestyle, such as "civilized versus chaotic, logical versus irrational, European versus semi-Asiatic",¹⁶ etc. This dichotomy was mirrored by two

14 See the detailed discussion of the Wanderers in Chapter 2.

15 See, for example, A.B., "Russian Periodicals," *The Burlington Magazine* 24/135 (1914): 199–202, which reviewed *The Olden Years* (*Starye gody*) and *Apollo*.

16 Mark Steinberg, *Petersburg Fin de Siècle* (New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 2011) 19; for more details see the anthology: K.G. Iusupov, comp., *Moskva – Peterburg:*

graphic design modes, the clarity and “rationality” of the Apollonian approach of St Petersburg graphic artists and its contrast, the “irrational” Dionysian mode of Moscow designers, who expressed Symbolist expressionist ambiguity.¹⁷ The turn-of-the-century Russian artistic world reflected the tension between the St Petersburg and the Moscow approaches to the arts, and, as will be shown, this tension was also present in art periodical production.

The *World of Art*, *The Golden Fleece* and *Apollo*, although appearing alongside a plethora of contemporary Russian periodicals of various genres, stand out in a number of important ways. First, for high quality of art reproduction and graphic design, these three journals did not have serious competitors. Conceived and designed as art objects and examples of fine book craftsmanship, they were concerned with the physical form and material presence of the periodical as such. Moreover, their creators and theorists contributed to shaping the notion of graphic design in Russian artistic culture. In 1898–1899, they announced the independence of the image from the text, and a position that by 1909 they had evolved to a statement about subordination of illustration to the written word.¹⁸ Their publication advanced Russian book arts and stimulated the development of graphic design, giving it a status comparable to that of painting or sculpture.

Second, these three journals distinguished themselves as art journals – with a strong emphasis on contemporary art, design and visual culture – in contrast to other major periodicals of the day, which were also addressed to the cultural elite and concerned with literature, philosophy, social issues as well as the arts. *The Scales* (*Vesy*, 1904–1909), one of the most important Modernist periodicals of the day, focused primarily on contemporary literature; the visual arts in this journal played only a secondary role. On the other hand, such important art periodicals as *Art Treasures of Russia* (*Khudozhestvennye sokrovishcha Rossii*, 1901–1907) and *The Olden Years* (*Starye gody*, 1907–1916) concentrated on art-historical topics. They produced high quality reproductions and reprinted old vignettes, but targeted mostly art collectors and art historians focused on art of the past and did not focus on contemporary art questions and exhibits.

Pro et contra. Dialog kul'tur v istorii natsional'nogo soznaniia (Sankt-Peterburg: Izdatel'stvo Russkogo Khristianskogo gumanitarnogo instituta, 2000).

17 The difference between Moscow and St Petersburg painting styles was also quite visible. For example, such a difference was pointed out in *The Studio International's* review of Sergei Diaghilev's exhibit of Russian art in 1906 in Paris. See Henri Franz, “The Exhibition of Russian Art in Paris,” *The Studio International* 39/165 (1906): 319–323.

18 See the detailed discussion of these conceptions in Chapter 2 and Chapter 4.

And finally, the appearance of the *World of Art*, *The Golden Fleece* and *Apollo* triggered the publication of a number of so-called “little” art journals printed in both the Russian capitals, St Petersburg and Moscow, and the major cities in the provinces. These journals did not necessarily boast fine reproductions and exquisite craftsmanship, but did include illustrated reviews and criticisms regarding cultural events and printed articles devoted to contemporary and historical art. They also positioned themselves as art periodicals and satisfied the growing demand in art reproductions and illustrations for a cheaper price.

To attract the subscribers some of these “little” magazines employed titles that directly referred to the *World of Art* or even plagiarized its title – thus emphasizing the undeniable importance and success of this periodical in the cultural life of the Russian Empire. For example, the supplement of the St Petersburg periodical the *Native Grainfield* (*Rodnaia niva*, 1904–1906) was straightforwardly entitled the *World of Art* (*Mir iskusstva*, 1905) without any relation to the group the World of Art or its journal. And the art periodical *In the World of Arts* (*V mire iskusstv*, 1907–1910), published in Kiev (Kyiv), slightly changed its title, which, however, still reminded the Sergei Diaghilev’s mouthpiece.

Some “little” art periodicals’ publishers were inspired by the Symbolist titles of *The Golden Fleece* or *The Scales* and, in order to attract readers, published under obscure titles that evoked multiple meanings. Thus, the St Petersburg art periodical *Daydream* (*Greza*, 1907) or the Moscow weekly *Dawns* (*Zori*, 1906) might create various allusions, while the Moscow art journal *Baian*¹⁹ (1914) intended to remind its readers of the symbols of the “national revival”.²⁰

Apollo with its title that alluded to the “classical revival”²¹ also had its followers. For example, the Moscow art monthly *Pegasus* (*Pegas*, 1915–1916), published by the film director Aleksandr Khanzhonkov (1877–1945), was one of the first periodicals devoted to film. Thus, all three journals discussed in this book represent significant milestones in the Russian art periodical publishing, a fact that was acknowledged by the subscribers and competitors.

Previous researchers of the *World of Art*, *The Golden Fleece* and *Apollo* have concentrated predominantly on the art-historical context and publication history; they emphasized the aesthetical or philosophical views of the participants of the journals and discussed the art shows organized by the editorial boards, focusing primarily on the artists associated with the journals. Even the

19 Baian (Boian) was the name of a Rus’ bard, who was mentioned in the epic tale *The Lay of Igor’s Campaign* (*Slovo o polku Igoreve*) written in the 12th century.

20 See the detailed discussion of the “national revival” in Chapter 2.

21 See the detailed discussion of the “classical revival” in Chapter 4.

World of Art group's innovations in graphic design have only been addressed by researchers in terms of their impact on the Russian graphic arts in general, but with no attention to the periodicals as art objects. This book aims to address that lacuna by focusing on the material and visual qualities of the *World of Art*, *The Golden Fleece* and *Apollo* as visual embodiments of group identities shaped in a rich historico-cultural context. It will analyze the role of images in their interaction with textual messages and explore the print revival in late Imperial Russia.

The Materiality of the Book and Gérard Genette's "Thresholds"

The material form of the verbal text is traditionally represented by a book, an instrument for the delivery of textual content. When we say "to read a book", we always mean reading the verbal text in order to receive the textual information. However, if we say "to take a book", we immediately refer to the material embodiment of the text. In everyday life the words "text" and "book" serve as interchangeable terms referring primarily to the verbal information. Moreover, in many spoken languages, including Slavic, the words "book" and "text" are often interchangeable and sometimes only additional contextual information (for example, "read" vs. "take") helps to clarify what we actually mean, the book as a material object or the delivery of verbal information provided by the text.

If the word "book" refers to the material embodiment of the text, the word "periodical" (*zhurnal*)²² connotes the repetitive, or periodic, appearance of various texts under the same journal or magazine title. The texts themselves are not repeated, however, the title of the periodical, which connotes a particular program, does not change. Likewise, the graphic design of the cover page sometimes remains the same (or appears modified according to a similar format and style) through the entire run. The verbal text in the periodical also comes in a material form – to be exact, a series of "notebooks" (unbound²³ in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries) that represent similar if not identical formats with the same or analogous designs. Notably, to define the materiality of the periodical in their memoirs or correspondences, the Russian

22 The Russian word *zhurnal* is adopted from the French word *journal* (from Fr. *jour* – day), while the Russian word *kniga* (book) came from Old Slavonic and probably originally meant a "letter", "literacy", "leaves of paper, joined together" and might be adopted from the East (See O. Trubachev, ed., *Etimologicheskii slovar' slavianskikh iazykov. Praslavianskii leksicheskii fond*. Vyp. 13. (Moskva: Nauka, 1987) 203–204).

23 See the detailed discussion on bindings in Chapter 1.

editors of the periodicals discussed in this study, often combined the words “book” and “periodical” together – “the book of a periodical” (“*knizhka zhurnal*”). Today it sounds like an obsolete phrase, but for them such “objectification” meant highlighting the journals they produced or subscribed to as material objects.

The primary function of books and periodicals is to carry the verbal textual information, however, in order to decode the meaning of the words, the reader has to become a *viewer* first and, in this case, the printed words and layout of the page work as visual texts. For example, in the early twentieth century, the visuality of the text would be creatively employed by the Futurists in their visual poetry, in which the letters, words and the page layout would function as images.²⁴ Indeed, the importance of the page layout, font and other visual aspects was recognized by the editors of the *World of Art*, *The Golden Fleece* and *Apollo*, who considered their journals art objects.

While the printed text is perceived by the reader/viewer visually, its primary function is to create a verbal meaning. This verbal meaning is often supported by graphic designs and illustrations that speak to the verbal text. The visual interpretation comes first – before beginning to interpret the meaning of the verbal text, the reader faces the material and the visual – binding, jacket, cover page, fly-leaf, title page, half titles, frontispieces, illustrations, typeface, and general layout of the text – everything that constitutes the whole “package” which is called the book or periodical. The tactile nature of the book is also experienced. The tactility is embodied in the quality of the binding and paper, the most material features of the package.

The packaging of the book or periodical is achieved through the collaboration of the publishers, editors, authors of the verbal text and the designers. The format, shape, cover, jacket, and other visual qualities of the book are “vocabulary that we, as readers, have learned to interpret” and understand so well that we do it unconsciously.²⁵ The material and visual qualities of the book or periodical give us clues about the verbal text and what meanings could be evoked during the reading process. Moreover, each individual edition of the same text creates new visual and material indicators and presents the text differently to the reader,²⁶ whose interpretation of the text depends on

24 See for example: Johanna Drucker, *The Visible Word: Experimental Typography and Modern Art, 1909–1923* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994).

25 Jae Rossman, “Reading Outside the Lines: Paratextual Analysis and Artists’ Books,” *Journal of Artists Books* 23 (Spring 2008): 31.

26 Anne O. Fisher, “Adapting Paratextual Theory to the Soviet Context: Publishing Practices and the Readers of Il’f and Petrov’s Ostap Bender Novels,” *The Space of the Book. Print*

the package and its messages. This frame is a “mediator” that enables communication between the author and the reader, but also it suggests a communication between the author and the designer, who “translates” the verbal text into the visual commentary.

To investigate how the package communicates and influences the reader, this work employs Gérard Genette’s terminology, especially his notion of “paratext”. Following Genette, the term “paratext” serves as an umbrella approach to the explanation of the material dimension of the periodical. The author introduced the notion of paratext in his *Paratexts: Thresholds of Interpretation*.²⁷ As Richard Macksey observes in the foreword to Genette’s monograph,

In its scope and exactitude *Paratexts* constitutes an encyclopaedic survey of the customs and institutions of the Republic of Letters as they are revealed in the borderlands of the text, a neglected region that the book maps with exceptional rigor. Other scholars have studied the literary use of individual paratextual elements, but Genette is seen to be the first to present a global view of liminal mediations and the logic of their relation to the reading public.²⁸

According to E.B. Greenwood, Genette’s theory is “refreshingly free of any distracting ideological agenda of the kind that underpins so much current criticism”.²⁹ In his theory of paratext, Genette emphasizes:

Most often, then, the paratext is itself a text: if it is still not the *text*, it is already *some* text. But we must at least bear in mind the paratextual value that may be vested in other types of manifestation: these may be iconic (illustrations), material (for example, everything that originates in the sometimes very significant typographical choices that go into the making the book), or purely factual. By *factual* I mean the paratext that consists

Culture in the Russian Social Imagination, ed. Miranda Remnek (Toronto, Buffalo & London: University of Toronto Press, 2011) 253.

27 Gérard Genette, *Paratexts: Thresholds of Interpretation*. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001). Genette’s theory was first published in French in 1987. See Gérard Genette, *Seuils* (Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1987; the first English translation appeared in 1997).

28 Richard Macksey, “Pausing on the Threshold,” *Paratexts: Thresholds of Interpretation*, by Gérard Genette (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001) xx.

29 E.B. Greenwood, “Paratexts: Thresholds of Interpretation,” *Notes and Queries* 46.1 (March 1999): 156.

not of an explicit message (verbal or other) but of a fact whose existence alone, if known to the public, provides some commentary on the text and influences how text is received.³⁰

Thus, the paratextual message serves to communicate between sender (the author and publisher) and addressee (public).

Due to its universality and flexibility, the term “paratext” appears very promising for use in scholarly works devoted to book and periodical studies. The term does not yet appear in the standard lexicons of the English language, “but it has so successfully entered the scholarly vocabulary that it is now applied – without quotation marks or pause for thought – to texts of every period and genre.”³¹ As William Sherman reports, scholars who accepted Genette’s term immediately after its introduction and shortly afterwards.³²

The greatest potential of Genette’s approach may arguably be realized in studies of the visual appearance of books and periodicals, fine-press tradition books and artists’ books. For example, Janine Barchas uses Genette’s conception to investigate eighteenth-century publication practices in England.³³ Examining title pages, frontispieces, and even musical scores included in the books, she states that “with each example of graphic design”, her study “seeks to explore and define the various influences on the novel’s appearance (from market practices to authorial control) as well as its literary effects”.³⁴ Moreover, Barchas examines the notion of an “authoritative” edition, which treats graphic design as “literary”, as if the author was working in collaboration with graphic designers or was cognizant of the designer’s production.³⁵

In examining interrelations between text and paratext, Genette does not limit his approach, but does justify the absolute dominance of the text over the paratext:

30 Genette 7. All *italics* are Genette’s.

31 William Sherman, “On the Threshold: Architecture, Paratext, and Early Print Culture,” *Agent of Change. Print Culture Studies after Elizabeth L. Eisenstein*, ed. Sabrina Alcorn Baron, Eric N. Lindquist, and Eleanor F. Shevlin, (Amherst & Boston: University of Massachusetts Press, 2007) 68.

32 Sherman 68.

33 Janine Barchas, *Graphic Design, Print Culture and the Eighteenth-Century Novel* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003).

34 Barchas 11.

35 Barchas 11.

The paratext is only an assistant, only an accessory of the text. And if the text without its paratext is sometimes like an elephant without a mahout, a power disabled, the paratext without the text is a mahout without an elephant, a silly show. Consequently the discourse on the paratext must never forget that it bears on a discourse, and that the meaning of its object depends on the object of this meaning, which is yet another meaning. A threshold exists to be crossed.³⁶

Thus, Genette underlines the ultimate importance of the text over the paratext. In this discussion, however, the tension between paratext and text, present in the Russian Modernist art periodicals, is highlighted and analyzed. This tension is discussed in the context of the journals' makers' expressed views on graphic design; and in the context of interaction between the visual and textual or, words and images.

Word-Image Intermediality

The images that comment on textual meaning can change the reader's perception of the text significantly or can even displace the textual information with its visual commentary. For example, in his 1923 article "Illustrations" ("Illiustratsii"), the Russian formalist theorist, Iurii Tynianov (1894–1943), noted that in the nineteenth-century public imagination, the art of illustration was so powerful that the public sometimes knew the pictorial representations of famous literary heroes much better than their original verbal/textual descriptions.³⁷ Recognizing the power of images, he warned that in-text visuals should function only as pictorial equivalents or direct expressions of words.³⁸ He advocated abandoning illustrations and argued that an illustrated book is a bad educational tool.³⁹ This opinion from 1923 was an acute formalist reaction against the lavish and richly illustrated fine press books and periodicals that flourished before the revolution of 1917. Such a radical position, however, accentuates the immanent power of images.

36 Genette 408–410.

37 Iurii Tynianov, "Illiustratsii," Iu. N. Tynianov, *Poetika, istoriia literatury, kino* (Moskva: Nauka, 1977) 312. The article "Illustrations" was first published in 1923 in the periodical *Book and Revolution* (*Kniga i revoliutsiia*), no. 4.

38 Tynianov 316.

39 Tynianov 318.

In contemporary theoretical inquiries, the recognition of the power of word-and-image messages is significantly growing. Thus, the academic journal *Word and Image: A Journal of Verbal/Visual Enquiry*, which began its publication in 1985, explores the interrelation between words and images on different levels and in various media including books and periodicals. In his *Picture Theory* (1994), one of the main contemporary theorists of word and image, W.J.T. Mitchell, claims that it is important to “find actual conjunctions of words and images in illustrated texts, or mixed media such as film, television, and theatrical performance”. He states, “with these media, one encounters a concrete set of empirical givens, an image-text structure responsive to prevailing conventions (or resistance to conventions) governing the relation of visual and verbal experience”.⁴⁰ Mitchell says that the “‘matter’ of image-text conjunction matters a great deal” in illuminated books or a genre such as “artist books”.⁴¹

Accepting Mitchell’s eloquent claims, this work transfers them to the discussion of the periodicals conceived as art objects that bear the features, important in their own right, of exquisite craftsmanship and fine art reproductions.⁴² The announcement of a new type of journal can be seen as a foreshadowing of “artists’ books” in late Imperial Russia. Moreover, to a certain extent, these periodicals can be understood as “artists’ periodicals” because by raising questions that were concerned with mechanical reproduction and the notion of “copy”, the art periodical makers paid attention to print quality and physical appearance, which, for the first time, became a focal point for the Russian producers of art journals.

The interdisciplinary nature of the scholarship devoted to words and images leads contemporary scholars toward the development of new methodologies for analysis and to the creation of a new terminology for definitions. Thus, scholars who study the connectivity of text and image, focusing on the analysis of the relationship and borders among the media of film, theatre, book and periodical design and other arts, invented the new term “intermediality”. Irina Rajewsky explains its meaning:

Generally speaking, and according to common understanding, ‘intermediality’ refers to relations between media, to medial interactions and interferences. Hence, ‘intermediality’ can be said to serve first and

40 W.J.T. Mitchell, *Picture Theory* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994) 90.

41 Mitchell 91.

42 For a summary of theoretical approaches to art reproduction see Robert Verhoogt, *Art in Reproduction: Nineteenth-Century Prints after Lawrence Alma-Tadema, Jozef Israels and Ary Scheffer* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2007) 18–23.

foremost as a flexible generic term that can be applied, in a broad sense, to any phenomenon involving more than one medium and thus to any phenomenon.⁴³

In this book, “intermediality” as a generic term is engaged for description of words and images and their interrelations in art periodicals. Images speak louder if they are interpreted in the context of words or the text they support, and, vice versa, words are understood differently due to how the imagery comments on the text. As will be shown, the word-image messages created by the periodicals can be decoded through analyzing the meanings produced by both the literary texts and visuals, such as vignettes, illustrations and art reproductions, which influence and even control the reader’s perception of the words.

Art Journals in the Cultural Context and Structure of the Book

This book is a cultural-historical study that focuses on the *World of Art*, *The Golden Fleece* and *Apollo* as art objects, highlighting their paratextual messages that conveyed commentaries on texts placing them in a social and technological context. All three journals discussed here appeared in the complicated socio-historical, cultural and political context that Russia experienced in 1898–1917. The Russo-Japanese War (1904–1905), the revolutions of 1905 and 1917 and World War I that began in 1914, and the political turmoil and instability in St Petersburg and Moscow affected the publication of art journals, their mandates, and aesthetic programs, and the development of the artistic ideas they generated. On the other hand, these political and social disturbances functioned together as an impetus to create journals as products of fine craftsmanship and to narrate recent art shows and events to contemporaries.

An effective interpretation of journals’ paratextual qualities and word-image intermediality can be achieved only if an additional means of contextual analysis can serve as the base of interpretation. According to Kenneth Womack, “A genuinely international and interdisciplinary phenomenon, the interpretative lens of cultural studies provides us with a means for exploring the cultural codes of a given work, as well as for investigating the institutional, linguistic, historical and sociological forces that inform that work’s publication

43 Irina Rajewsky, “Border Talks: The Problematic Status of Media Borders in the Current Debate about Intermediality,” *Media Borders, Multimodality and Intermediality*, ed. Lars Ellestrom, (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010) 51–68.

and critical reception".⁴⁴ Art journals are cultural productions with complex structures and their paratextual characteristics and word-image intermedial relations cannot be explored separately from their cultural contexts, where they were produced and functioned as art objects. Therefore, the reader of this book will find detailed descriptions of the historical preconditions for the rise of art journals, i.e. the emergence of the first art periodicals and illustrated press in the nineteenth century, the development of reproduction technologies and the role of art reproductions in culture – all of which are factors that led to the appearance of the art journals as art objects.

The interdisciplinary study of art periodicals as art objects also benefits from a comprehensive exploration of the socio-historical context of the formation and function of their editorial boards since art journals were created by like-minded people and functioned as collective cultural productions. As such, this study discusses the biographies and backgrounds of editors-in-chief, patrons and the most important contributors to the periodicals and examines the periodicals' ideologies as expressed through their editorial statements. These editorial philosophies were articulations of group identities that became the *raison d'être* behind the art journals' appearance. By publishing art periodicals, which were more than mere "fetish" objects, these like-minded people communicated artistically and expressed their self-awareness and self-understanding in the dynamically developing contemporary artistic culture. Moreover, the art journals were laboratories of artistic enquiry, which created the foundation for individual achievement.

Hence, this book will discuss the emergence of the art periodical press in Russia; the technological and historical preconditions of the journals' emergence; and will explore the journals as art objects with an emphasis on their material and visual essence within the print revival movement. It will analyze the intermedial relationship between such components of the paratext as title, cover, frontispieces, vignettes, illustrations, art reproductions, layout, etc. and the meanings provided by the written text explained in the socio-historical context.

In discussing periodicals we deal with a series of "books" – journals that followed one another during an almost-twenty-year period (1898–1917). During their years of publication, the *World of Art*, *The Golden Fleece* and *Apollo* altered their looks and revised their aesthetic directions due to different reasons. Sometimes the changes were a reflection of artistic, cultural or societal changes. In other cases, the new look could be a result of financial difficulties

44 Kenneth Womack, "Introduction: Theorising Culture, Reading Ourselves," *Literary Theories*, ed. Julian Wolfreys, (New York: New York University Press, 1999) 593.

experienced by the editorial boards. In some situations the ideological transformations inside of the editorial boards triggered the development of a new visual appearance and textual content. Today each single issue is a rarity, which is preserved in the special library collections, and each single number deserves to be examined in detail.

However, due to the number of issues printed, the analysis of every single issue of the *World of Art*, *The Golden Fleece* and *Apollo* would expand beyond the limits of one book. Therefore, this work offers a detailed examination of the first number of each of these aforementioned journals, which were the most important in terms of the journals' visual and textual presentation. These inaugural issues can be seen as manifestos that represent the mission statements of their editorial teams. In each art periodical discussed here, the editorial boards articulated their philosophies or manifestoes (*programmnye stat'i*) to announce their aesthetic views and ideologies. All three journals examined here chronicle some of the most important stages in the development of Russian Modernist art in one of the richest periods of its history. Thus, the *World of Art* announced the Europeanization of art theories and art themes in both words and images and offered a Russian version of Art Nouveau; *The Golden Fleece* promoted Symbolist art, and *Apollo* advocated Apollonianism as a classical revival. Conceived and produced as art objects, the art journals became laboratories of graphic design experiments. Therefore, the inaugural issues are the most important for analysis precisely because they represent the initial intentions of the journals' creators in both textual and paratextual dimensions. A close examination of the first inaugural issues will help establish the grounds for future studies of the changes and further experiments with graphic design and physical form that are also ultimately important in the analysis of the art journals as art objects.

This book contains four chapters. The first chapter, "When Russia Learned to Reproduce Art: Graphic Design, Materials and Printing Techniques in Nineteenth-Century Imperial Russia", is a historical overture, devoted to the history of the periodical press and reproduction technologies in the "age of mechanical reproduction" in Russia. It focuses on the material aspects of nineteenth-century printing and art reproduction technologies. The development of reproduction techniques, elite art periodicals and the illustrated press designed for mass consumption, and the physical look of the periodicals are the subjects of this historical overview. Also the chapter introduces some aspects of censorship and its role in periodical production.

The second, third and fourth chapters are respectively devoted to the *World of Art* ("World of Art and the Origins of the 'Print Revival' in Late Imperial

Russia”), *The Golden Fleece* (“*The Golden Fleece* or Russia’s ‘*Très Riches Heures*’”) and *Apollo* (“*Apollo*: Between ‘Archaism’ and Modernism”). These chapters were designed with a symmetrical structure in mind: each chapter features a survey of scholarly research devoted to the periodical and is divided into two sections.

In each case, the first section is dedicated to elucidating the artistic and historico-cultural context and the periodical’s appearance and describes the editor-in-chief of each journal and the most influential people associated with periodical production. It discusses the journals’ main contributors as these people were responsible for the creation of the art periodicals and their ideologies and analyzes the editorial mission statements. The first sections also define the state of the art periodical press in late Imperial Russia in the historical context of each journal’s appearance. This helps to set the groundwork for a better understanding of the impetus for each periodical’s emergence.

The second sections in these chapters focus on the paratextual characteristics of each journal and analyze the journal’s material form, its visual appearance, i.e. the cover and title pages, vignettes, end pieces and art reproductions, and examines the meaning of its title and its possible sources. In terms of the interpretation of the textual-paratextual relationship, each chapter addresses word-and-image intermedial relations between the texts (i.e. editorial programs, art criticisms and literary works) and images (i.e. illustrations and art reproductions). The “Conclusion” offers a summary and sketches a direction for further research.

When Russia Learned to Reproduce Art

Graphic Design, Materials and Printing Techniques in Nineteenth-Century Imperial Russia

Before the *World of Art*, *The Golden Fleece* and *Apollo* initiated the print revival between 1898 and 1917, Russian periodical culture went through several stages of development. This chapter serves as an introduction to the print revival in late Imperial Russia. It describes the role and functions of images in illustrated magazines and art periodicals; traces the development of reproduction technologies in the nineteenth century and their impact on illustrated periodical production; discusses how nineteenth-century periodicals looked as physical objects with respect to their cover pages and bindings; and briefly explains the censorship regulations in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Providing this background will help shed light on the innovations of the early twentieth century.

Early Russian Periodical Design

The first Russian printed newspaper *News* (*Vedomosti*) was launched by Peter the Great in 1702 and was published erratically until 1727.¹ It was very plain with little adornment.² The first vignette for this publication, a copper engraving, was designed specifically for the June 28, 1711 issue of *News*. It depicted Mercury flying over the Neva River in St Petersburg and was created

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- 1 The newer printed edition began its circulation at 3,000 copies of 40 issues per year. The newspaper content celebrated the government's authority and military successes. For more information see T.S. Georgieva, *Russkaia kul'tura: istoriia i sovremennost'* (Moskva: Iurait, 1999) 136; Gary Marker, *Publishing, Printing, and the Origins of Intellectual Life in Russia, 1700–1800* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1985) 27–28.
 - 2 Officially, the print revolution began on April 19, 1563, the day on which the first book was printed in the Moscow Press House (*Pechatnyi dvor*). This book was *The Apostle*, printed by the pioneer printers Ivan Fedorov and Petr Mstislavets. See S.F. Librovich, *Istoriia knigi v Rossii*, vol. 1 (Sankt-Peterburg – Moskva: Izdanie tovarishchestva M.O. Vol'f, 1913) 58. The introduction of this new type of book production undermined the established business of book copyists who copied from manuscripts.

by Aleksei Zubov (1682–1741),³ the Dutchman Adriaan Schoonebeek's (1661–1705) student, and was reprinted in later issues of the newspaper several times.

Copper engraving was the first and main reproduction technique widely employed in publishing. The graphic design of the Russian journals and newspapers published through the eighteenth century was often quite similar across all editions. The inside text was not usually decorated. Only the title page, whose layout was always arranged symmetrically on a vertical axis, was adorned, with an allegorical vignette that sometimes included an emblem. The title was placed at the top of the page; it was followed by a short description of the periodical and date of publication. A vignette usually occupied the lower part of the page, while the very bottom identified the place of publication and its publisher. Occasionally a decorative frame was used, but mostly this occurred in books and rarely in periodicals. Both frames and vignettes were quite expensive to reproduce, so the majority of publications did not have any decorations.

The first title pages generally used type set in simple compositions, sometimes adorned with decorative setting rules (*nabornaia lineika*).⁴ The decorations or vignettes reflected the main artistic styles in architecture and the decorative art, namely Classicism or Baroque. The engraving technique was *politipazh* (Russian, from the French *polytypage*⁵): a drawing was copied from the wood engraving to the metal plate or matrix. In the *polytypage*, the vignettes could be printed together with the type. *Polytypages* were designed for re-use in various editions. Every press house preserved collections of typefaces with various *polytypages*; they were either made in Russia or imported from abroad. In the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, the range of vignettes was quite limited and often came from the same engraving shop. Therefore, the

3 Zubov, the first Russian graphic artist involved in periodical graphic design, was a product of the first engraving workshop in Russia, which was established in the Armory in the Moscow Kremlin in the late sixteenth century. When the Academy of Sciences was established in St Petersburg, the engraving school was opened on its premises in 1724. Anna Kask and Marina Mokhnacheva, *Russkii illiustrirovannyi zhurnal, 1703–1941. Russian Illustrated Magazine, 1703–1941* (Moskva: Agey Tomesh, 2006) 5.

4 A *Setting rule* is a metal strip used in the hand-setting of type in a composing stick to separate the line being set from the previous one or for decoration of the page on the top or in the bottom.

5 According to a French explanation, the definition of *polytypage* is *reproduction du bois gravé par cliché sur une plaque en métal*. See *Reverso: French Definition Dictionary*, 26 August, 2012 <<http://dictionary.reverso.net/french-definition/polytypage>>.

same vignettes were used repeatedly and sometimes appeared in completely different, ideologically contrasting publications.⁶

The Popular Illustrated Press in the Nineteenth Century

Art reproductions and illustrations first appeared in popular illustrated periodicals, a new genre, adopted by the Russian press from Western Europe in the late eighteenth to early nineteenth centuries. Namely illustrated magazines introduced art reproduction before art periodicals began to reproduce art. In Western Europe, illustrated periodicals became popular after *The Penny Magazine* (1832–1845) set the tone for the development of the illustrated press, first in England and then across Europe.⁷ In Imperial Russia the pioneering periodical of this kind was the annual *The Picturesque Review* (*Zhivopisnoe obozrenie*). Addressed to the general reader, it was produced in Moscow from 1836 to 1842 at the private press of Auguste-René Semen (Avgust Semen) (1771–1862), a publisher of French origin. The proliferation of printing technologies and publishing in Russia was closely connected to Western Europe – many notable publishers and inventors immigrated to Russia to seek business opportunities unimaginable in Europe due to the strong competition there in the publishing and printing industry. Similar to *The Penny Magazine*, which was intended to provide “useful knowledge for everyone”,⁸ this annual was a richly illustrated publication, whose art reproductions were intended to educate the reader with the images of unknown species or exotic geographical locations.

Illustrated periodicals, such as *The Picturesque Review* as well as its successors, published articles devoted to the visual arts. A typical article dedicated to art provided general information about the artist and historical information about the image. For example, the article “Raphael’s Cartoons” (“Kartony Rafaelia”), published in *The Picturesque Review* (no. 1, 1836), featured the artist’s biography, an explanation of the term “cartoon”, and the short history of the creation of some pieces.⁹ The text was supported by the engraving of a cartoon attributed to Raphael. *The Picturesque Review* represented a new type of periodical and signaled the importance of art reproduction for informative purposes.

Another major Russian illustrated periodical of the first half of the nineteenth century was *The Illustration* (*Illustratsiia*), launched in 1845 by Nestor

6 Kask and Mokhnacheva 182–185.

7 Verhoogt 224.

8 Verhoogt 224.

9 “Kartony Rafaelia,” *Zhivopisnoe obozrenie* 1 (1836): 17–20.



FIGURE 1.1
 Title page of *The Illustration* (Illiustratsiia),
 1843. Wood engraving.
 COURTESY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF
 ILLINOIS AT URBANA-CHAMPAIGN
 LIBRARY.

Kukol'nik (1809–1868), who in the 1830s and 1840s was one of the most important figures on the Russian literary¹⁰ and publishing scene. The richly illustrated St Petersburg weekly was published until 1849 (Fig. 1.1). The prototype for *The Illustration* was the French weekly *L'Illustration*, which was in turn modelled after *The Penny Magazine*. *The Illustration* was devoted to geography, history, agriculture, home economics, discoveries and inventions, and also published articles dedicated to visual arts, music and theatre. Similar to the earliest Russian periodicals, its title page was arranged symmetrically on a vertical axis and was decorated with an elaborate decorative frame. The title was placed at the top and an allegorical vignette occupied the lower part of the page.

The first illustrated periodicals designed as popular editions were not profitable initiatives, as their subscriptions did not cover the costs of publication.¹¹ For example, the price for a yearly subscription to *The Illustration* was 11 roubles 45 kopecks (with delivery). By comparison, in the first half of the nineteenth

10 Christine Rydel, "Nestor Vasil'evich Kukol'nik (8 September 1809–8 December 1868)," *Russian Literature in the Age of Pushkin and Gogol: Poetry and Drama: Dictionary of Literary Biography*, ed. Christine Rydel, (Detroit: Gale Group, 1999) 166–178.

11 Rydel 172.

century, the price for a poorly furnished room for rent in St Petersburg, including heating and domestics, was 5 roubles per month.¹² An average clerk's monthly salary was about 10 roubles.¹³ The Russian gentry and *raznochintsy* (professionals and clerks of non-gentry origin) that might be interested in subscribing to this or similar periodicals were rather small as a group. In the 1850s in Imperial Russia, the total number of literate officials and nobility, which were the potential subscribers for such illustrated editions, was only about 103,000.¹⁴ Only a small number had a university education.

The illustrated periodicals became more affordable when modern wood engraving (*tortsovaia graviura*) and lithography were introduced to Russia and became widely employed.¹⁵ Colourful images attracted subscribers, providing them with visual interpretations close to reality – a desirable feature as verisimilitude was considered one of the most valuable characteristics in portrayals of real life. A principal achievement in these terms was Vasilii Timm's (1820–1895) *The Russian Art Leaflet* (*Russkii khudozhestvennyi listok*). An illustrated magazine that published Timm's own and other artists' works (i.e. Ivan Aivazovskii [1817–1900], Petr Sokolov [1821–1899], Mikhail Mikeshein [1835–1896], etc.) in lithographs (Fig. 1.2) was of chief importance in the reproduction and use of images. This periodical was published two or three times per week in St Petersburg and lasted for more than a decade, from 1851 to 1862. Timm's invention was that he held copyright to all the images that his magazine reproduced as his “artistic property”.

At first, the lithographs in *The Leaflet* were published in two colours; but from 1861 onward, Timm established his own lithography workshop and had the opportunity to print images in four, five and more colours.¹⁶ Timm's periodical represented a visual chronicle of major events in the public life of the Empire. He widely employed photographs as a basis for his lithographs;¹⁷ his lithographic works demonstrated a meticulous reproduction of his models

12 Liubov Pisar'kova, “Chinovnik na sluzhbe v kontse XVIII – nachale XIX veka,” *Otechestvennye zapiski* 2/16 (2004) 23 Sept. 2010 <<http://www.strana-oz.ru/?article=833&numid=17>>.

13 Due to their constrained income, a clerk's life was quite miserable – as shown in Nikolai Gogol's short story “The Overcoat” (1839) or in Fedor Dostoevskii's novel *Poor People* (1845). An average clerk could hardly pay the equivalent of his monthly earnings for a piece of entertainment.

14 S.G. Pushkarev, *Rossia v XIX veke (1801–1914)* (N'iu Iork: izdatel'stvo imeni Chekhova, 1956) 57.

15 Discussion devoted to the technological development follows.

16 L. Tarasov, *Vasilii Fedorovich Timm* (Moskva: “Iskusstvo,” 1954) 24.

17 Tat'iana Saburova, “Early Masters of Russian Photography,” *Photography in Russia 1840–1940*, ed. David Elliott (Oxford: Ars Nicolai, 1992) 39.



FIGURE 1.2 *Vasili Timm. His Majesty Emperor Aleksandr Nikolaevich and Her Majesty Empress Mariia Aleksandrovna (Ikh velichestvo gosudar' imperator Aleksandr Nikolaevich i gosudarynia imperatritsa Mariia Aleksandrovna). Illustration for The Russian Art Leaflet (Russkii khudozhestvennyi listok), January 4, 1858. Lithograph. COURTESY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS AT URBANA-CHAMPAIGN LIBRARY.*

with a high level of verisimilitude. However, Timm did not provide his reader with a detailed textual description of the events he portrayed in lithographs. The images dominated and text played only a secondary role as a short commentary. Timm's mission was to inform the reader visually. Before photography became the main means of reporting, he was the first art reporter in Imperial Russia; he bore witness to both the Crimean War and scenes from St Petersburg court life, as well as the everyday life of St Petersburg, its fairs, festivals, and races – and reported on them to his subscribers.

In the second half of the nineteenth century, illustrated periodicals grew dramatically after 1861, when a shift in readership occurred. After the emancipation of the serfs, a new kind of reader, one who came from the peasantry, emerged. Former peasants moved to the cities and formed the working and lower middle classes. Due to intensive industrialisation, literacy became important for many professions. That triggered the development of the new book and periodical culture that suited the preferences of the former peasants, who valued folklore-inspired narratives and easily understandable *lubok* (popular prints) pictures. Under these new conditions, popular taste gradually

shifted from cheap *lubok* pictures, calendars, and series of pictured popular narratives and tales to a new kind of popular literature – so-called *lubok* books and illustrated magazines.¹⁸

The popular prints, *lubki*, appeared in Russia in the seventeenth century.¹⁹ They usually depicted Peter the Great, the everyday life of the folk and the nobility, folk feasts, folktales and popular parables, Biblical themes and moral messages about the deadly sins and other related themes. Some plots of the *lubki* were borrowed from West European literature or represented exotic messages copied from newspapers.²⁰ The first *lubok* books were printed in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Their repertoire was diverse, ranging from Biblical tales to historical and folkloric narratives or they retold popular romances from Western Europe.²¹ A *lubok* book usually contained 8 to 32 pages;²² each page contained an illustration and inscription that commented on the picture. They were enormously popular. A. Reitblat reports that the annual edition of *lubok* literature generated more than four million copies in the late nineteenth century. These cheap books were considered vulgar by the cultural elite, but their circulation far exceeded the circulation of books by Ivan Turgenev, Mikhail Saltykov-Shchedrin or Lev Tolstoi.²³ By the second half of the nineteenth century the term “*lubochnyi*” (adj. used as “*lubochnaia kartinka*” – *lubok* picture; “*lubochnaia kniga*” – *lubok* book) became conventional for defining both the popular prints and cheap *lubok*

18 Jeffrey Brooks, *When Russia Learned to Read. Literacy and Popular Literature, 1861–1917* (Evanston: Northwestern UP, 2003) xiii–xvii.

19 The first popular prints were brought to Russia by German merchants in the sixteenth century. The first indigenous examples were printed in Ukraine in the early seventeenth century. They provided a satire of the invasion of Polish Catholicism. In Russia, popular prints and professional engravings were not distinguished according to formal characteristics and were created at the same premises by the same engravers that engraved Bible, Psalter, etc. The origin of the popular prints was connected to the “court culture” of “*barskie zabavy*” (noble pastime) of the seventeenth century. In the 1770–1780th the image carriers were changed significantly and the popular prints became the property and production of the commoners and their subject-matter was expanded. O.R. Khromov, *Russkaia lubochnaia kniga XVII–XIX vekov* (Moskva: “Pamiatniki istoricheskoi mysli,” 1998) 175.

20 See the detailed thematic classification of popular prints in Dmitrii Rovinskii, *Russkie narodnye kartinki* (Sankt-Peterburg: Izdatel'stvo “Tropa Troianova,” 2002).

21 A.G. Sakovich, “Narodnye gravirovannye knigi v Rossii XVII–XIX vekov: repertuar i bytovanie,” *Mir narodnoi kartinki* (Moskva: Progress-Traditsiia, 1997) 112–131.

22 Khromov 65.

23 A. Reitblat, “Glup li ‘Glupy milord?’” *Lubochnaia kniga*, ed. and comp. A. Reitblat (Moskva: Khudozhestvennaia literatura, 1990) 6.

books; the same term was used by elite as a label of cheapness or vulgar artistic quality and referred not just to popular prints but to everything that was associated with poor taste.

By the end of the nineteenth century, cheap *lubok* books and illustrated periodicals appeared in every house: in the countryside and cities, low-class rented apartments and peasant houses. Designed not only for reading, but also for viewing, they satisfied the desire for images. The illustrations would be cut out of magazines or *lubok* books and would replace *lubki* on the walls beside icons or carefully collected in folders for personal enjoyment and entertainment.

The illustrated magazines reached their highest popularity at the end of the nineteenth century; they were called “thin magazines” (*tonkie zhurnaly*)²⁴ in contrast to the “thick journals” (*tolstye zhurnaly*) intended for the serious well-educated reader, whose ultimate intention was to read thoughtful literary works and criticism.²⁵ Designed for the sophisticated elite, they did not feature illustrations and while they provided the reader with literary criticism, they usually lacked art sections. Art criticism and reproductions became the domain of art periodicals, which appeared in the early nineteenth century. By the turn of the century, art periodicals would adopt the practice of publishing serious literary criticism and discussions common for the “thick journals”. Thus, literary sections with literary works and criticism would become an integral part of the *World of Art*, *The Golden Fleece* and *Apollo*.

Art Periodicals in Imperial Russia

In contrast to illustrated magazines, the art periodical press was designed for the refined educated reader interested in the arts. Their circulation numbers were substantially smaller and their price was higher. The major

24 Brooks 111–117.

25 The place of the “thick journals” in Russian culture of the nineteenth century was essential. For a review of the “thick journals” of the nineteenth century, see Robert Belknap, “Survey of Russian Journals, 1840–1880,” *Literary Journals in Imperial Russia*, ed. Deborah A. Martinsen (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997); *Ocherki po istorii russkoi zhurnalistiki i kritiki*, ed. V.G. Berezin, N.P. Emelianov, N.I. Sokolov, and N.I. Totubalin (Leningrad: Izdatel'stvo Leningradskogo universiteta, 1965); The “thick journals” of the turn of the century are discussed in the collection of articles *Iz istorii russkoi zhurnalistiki kontsa XIX – nachala XX veka*, ed. B.I. Esin (Moskva: Izdatel'stvo Moskovskogo universiteta, 1973); also see B.A. Bialik, ed., *Literaturnyi protsess i russkaia zhurnalistika kontsa XIX – nachala XX veka. 1890–1904* (Moskva: Nauka, 1982).

art journals in the nineteenth century were published in Moscow and St Petersburg.

The first art periodical in Russia, *The Journal of Fine Arts* (*Zhurnal iziashchnykh iskusstv*), was published in Moscow in 1807 by Johann Gottlieb Buhle (1763–1821), a professor of German origin at Moscow University. It was a bilingual edition issued in Russian and German. This journal published essays about artists, translations from Johann Winckelmann and articles devoted to Russian art; it lasted for only three issues and ceased its publication after its sponsor, Mikhail Murav'ev (1757–1807), the Minister of Education, died.²⁶

The initiative to publish a periodical devoted to the visual arts was resumed under the same title sixteen years later. The new bimonthly, *The Journal of Fine Arts* (*Zhurnal iziashchnykh iskusstv*), was issued in 1823 in St Petersburg by Vasilii Grigorovich (1786–1865), the Secretary of the Imperial Academy of Arts under direction of the Society for Encouragement of the Arts.²⁷ The new journal elucidated various themes, from general aesthetic and art-historical issues to biographies of famous artists and discussions of their artworks. The editor's vision of the sections and themes of the periodical was clearly defined. Thus, the Arts Section (*Khudozhestva*), Literature (*Slovesnost'*), Arts in Russia (*Khudozhestva v Rossii*), Art Criticism (*Kritika*) and Miscellaneous (*Smes'*) together comprised one of the first professional art periodicals in Russia. The *World of Art*, *The Golden Fleece* and *Apollo* would later adopt this practice of dividing a journal into sections. Moreover, it is notable that the main part of the first issue of *The Journal of Fine Arts*, the Art Section, published translated excerpts from Winckelmann's *History of Ancient Art*.²⁸

The Journal of Fine Arts was not long-lived; it ceased publishing in 1825, producing nine issues in total. The first art journals initiated the tradition of art periodical publishing. They publicized the European art-historical vocabulary and introduced up-to-date ideas on art and aesthetics to the reader.

26 N.P. Sobko, "Chto predstaviali iz sebia russkie khudozhestvennye zhurnaly 1807–1897," *Iskusstvo i khudozhestvennaia promyshlennost'* 1 (1898): 8.

27 D. Ia. Severiukhin and O.L. Leikind, *Zolotoi vek khudozhestvennykh ob'edinenii v Rossii i sssr (1820–1932)* (Peterburg: Izdatel'stvo Chernysheva, 1992) 178.

28 Iogan [Johann] Vinkel'man [Winckelmann], "Istoriia khudozhestv. O proiskhozhdenii khudozhestv," *Zhurnal iziashchnykh iskusstv* 1 (1823): 18–24; About Winckelmann's republications in the periodical see in K.Iu. Lappo-Danilevskii, "Lessing i Winckelmann v 'Zhurnale iziashchnykh iskusstv' V.I. Grigorovicha," *Russkaia literatura* 2 (2001): 105–116.

The early Russian art periodicals reproduced art either rarely or did not reproduce art at all, offering art reproductions in a separate supplement or folio. Art reproduction within art periodicals was an expensive initiative without any stable prospective of turning a profit from the journals' subscribers. Moreover, in the first half of the nineteenth century, the number of potential subscribers, artistic elites, and people professionally interested in the visual arts was much smaller than the number of those people who could be potentially interested in illustrated magazines. Therefore, art journals with or without reproductions were a rare publishing enterprise. A shift toward an increase (quite modest in comparison to the illustrated popular magazines) in the circulation of the art periodical press happened only toward the end of the nineteenth century when reproduction technologies proliferated and created conditions for less pricey art reproduction.

The first Russian art periodical that featured art reproductions within its body appeared only in 1862. It was the St Petersburg monthly *The Northern Light: The Russian Art Album* (*Severnoe Siianie: russkii khudozhestvennyi al'bom*) published until 1865 by Vasilii Genkel' (Wilhelm Henkel, 1825–1910), a publisher of Prussian origin (Fig. 1.3). The periodical, which was not associated with the Academy or the Society for Encouragement of the Arts, published articles devoted to Russian art exclusively. In this edition, metal engravings printed in Leipzig, which raised the price, followed text (Fig. 1.4). It was an important point historically, and a new culture of preserving reproductions was introduced: high-quality reproductions in insets were separated with thin silk paper to prevent damage.

Art reproduction now became a profitable enterprise not only for cheap middlebrow illustrated magazines but also for the more refined art press. Thus, *The Northern Light* presented itself as a contemporary art journal. Its first issue started with the reproduction of Timofei Neff's²⁹ *Nymph* (1858), a female nude painting that triggered endless debate, numerous caricatures in the press and gained tremendous popularity after it was acquired by the Hermitage Museum in 1860 and was exhibited in several art shows.³⁰ Instead of an editorial article at the beginning of the journal, the journal published an editor's note about

29 Timofei Neff (1805–1877) was a historical and portraiture painter of Estonian origin. After graduation from Dresden Art Academy, he moved to St Petersburg in 1826 and became a famous artist associated with the Academy of Arts and the Hermitage art collection where he worked as a custodian.

30 See the details about this painting in Margaret Samu, "The Female Nude in Nineteenth-Century Russian Art: A Study in Assimilation and Resistance," PhD diss., New York U, 2010, 140–156.

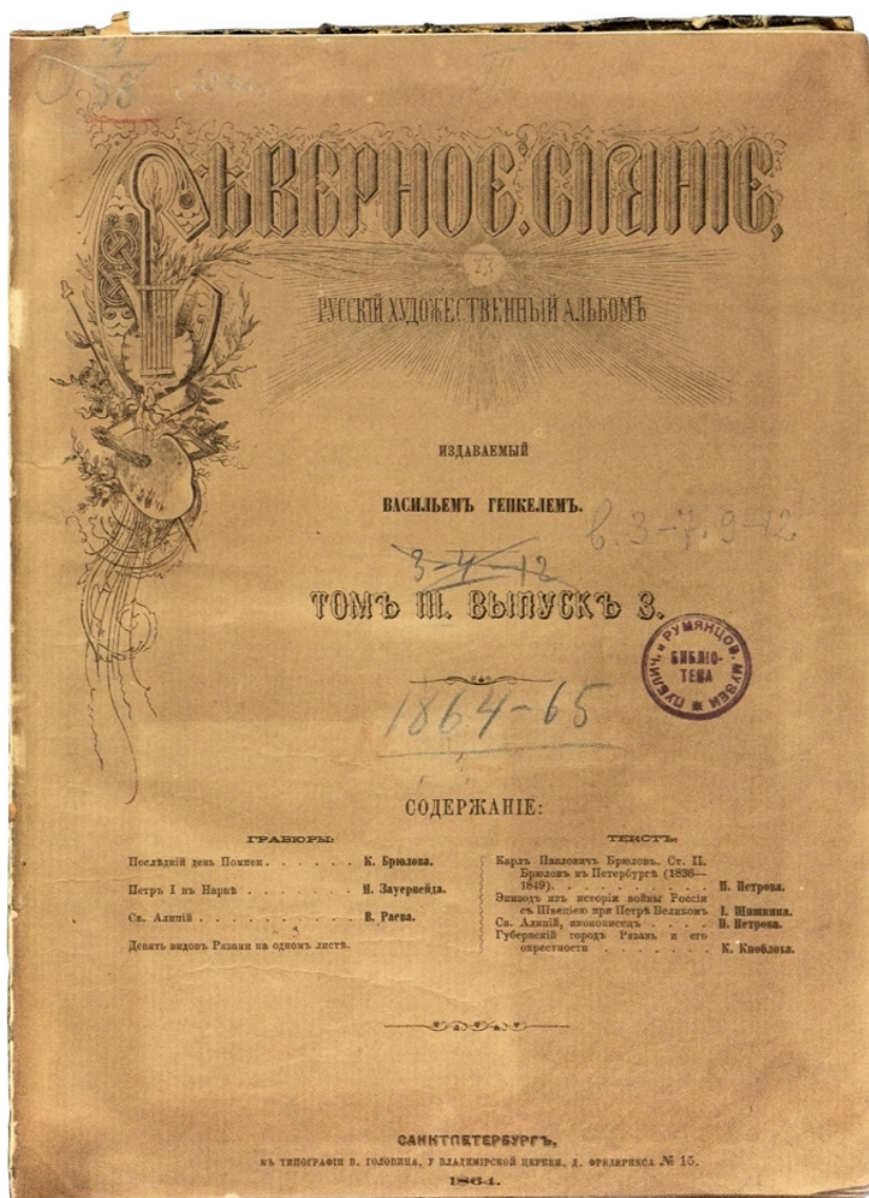


FIGURE 1.3 *Title page of The Northern Light: The Russian Art Album (Severnoe Siianie: russkii khudozhestvennyi al'bom), 1862.*
COURTESY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS AT URBANA-CHAMPAIGN LIBRARY.

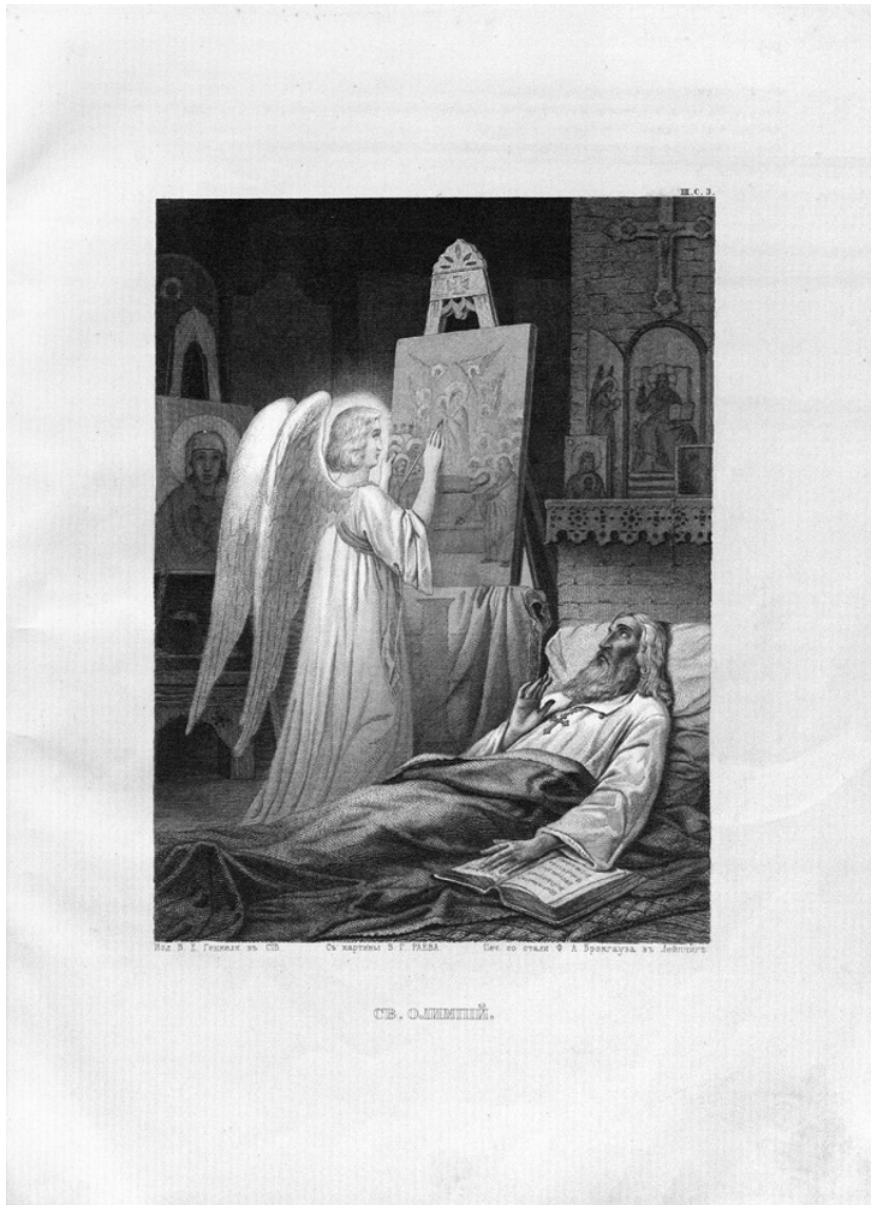


FIGURE 1.4 V.G. Raev. St Olympias (Sv. Olimpii), art reproduction for *The Northern Light: The Russian Art Album* (Severnoe Siianie: russkii khudozhestvennyi al'bom), no. 3, vol. 3, 1864. Steel engraving.

COURTESY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS AT URBANA-CHAMPAIGN LIBRARY.

this art work and a promotion of the photo-reproduction of the painting that could be purchased for 2 roubles in one of the bookshops advertised by the journal. Neff's *Nymph* was reproduced in one thousand copies printed in Berlin and its engraving entered the album *Copies from Paintings by Russian Artists* (*Kopii s kartin russkikh khudozhnikov*).³¹ This fact signals that in the second half of the nineteenth century, art reproduction became a profitable enterprise and underlines the role played by journals in marketing reproductions. If the lower classes enjoyed cheap reproductions from illustrated magazines, the middle and upper class could purchase an expensive photo-reproduction of a popular painting for framing and hanging on the wall. Moreover, in announcing the yearly subscription for 1864, *The Northern Light* emphasized that the journal's readers would have an opportunity to participate in a contest to win a large engraving for decorating their home.

After *The Northern Light* closed, art publishing resumed only in 1883. The new art periodical, *The Herald of the Fine Arts* (*Vestnik iziashchnykh iskusstv*), was published until 1890 in St Petersburg under the patronage of the Imperial Academy of Arts. This officially endorsed publication was edited by Andrei Somov (1830–1909), the father of the future participant of the *World of Art*, the artist and graphic designer Konstantin Somov (1869–1939). The journal was supplemented with the biweekly *Art News* (*Khudozhestvennye novosti*) and published a complementary collection of art reproductions. This progressive periodical was issued only 4–6 times per year due to the “insufficient number of specialists in art criticism, lack of well-trained draughtsmen and engravers, difficulty with printing the art reproduction supplements and the requirement of ordering reproductions in Europe”.³² While the number of subscribers to the popular press was steadily growing, the elite art journals still remained an exclusive enterprise tailored to the specialist reader.

In contrast to its forerunners, *The Herald of the Fine Arts* was richly decorated with in-text *polytypages*: the stylized in historical styles vignettes, end pieces, and initials, which were phototype³³ reproductions of European Academic art. All in-text reproductions were wood engravings and

31 Samu 141.

32 “Ot redaktsii,” *Vestnik iziashchnykh iskusstv* (1) 1883.

33 *Phototype* (or collotype printing) – a type of planographic printing in which a gelatin-coated glass or metal plate is used as a printing surface. It may be used for pictorial catalogues, post cards, view books, art subjects, displays, broadsides, posters, etc. This process is also known as albertype, artotype, heliotype, and Lichtdruck. See Edward Allen, ed. and comp., *Harper's Dictionary of the Graphic Arts* (New York, Evanston, and London: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1963) 54–55.

photozincograph³⁴ *polytypages* (for an example see Fig. 1.5). *The Herald of the Fine Arts* epitomised the almost vanished practice of fine publishing, especially against the background of the steadily growing, popular, cheap illustrated periodical press. *The Herald*, to a certain extent, seems to have anticipated

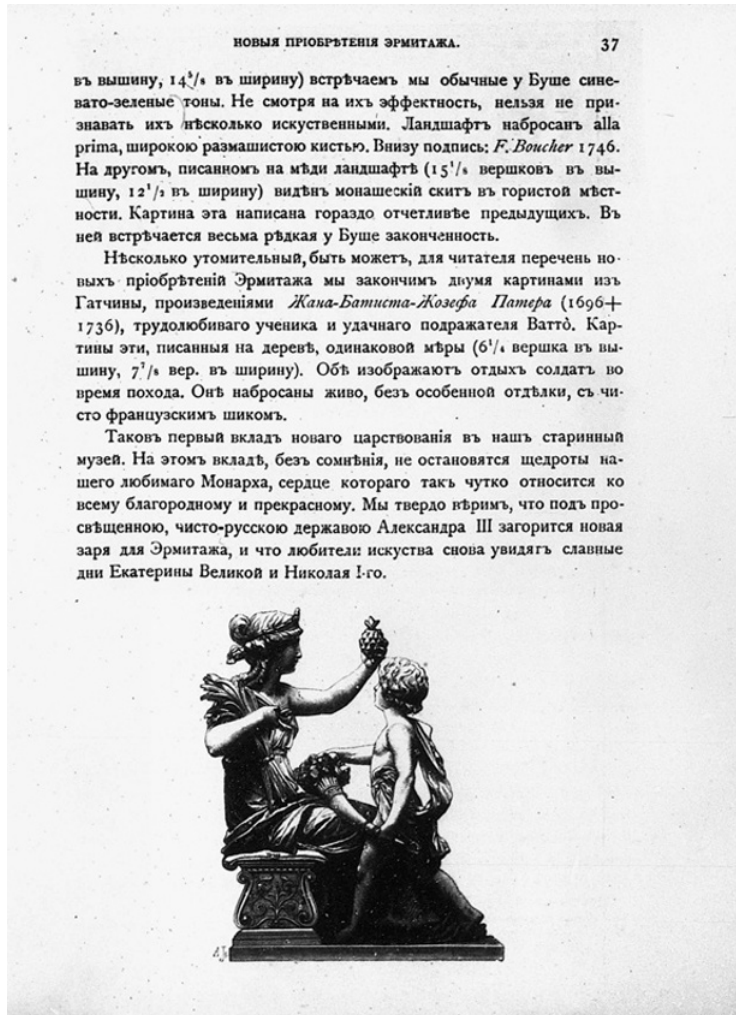


FIGURE 1.5 Page from the first issue of *The Herald of Fine Arts* (*Vestnik iziashchnykh iskusstv*) with the end piece reproduced from Otto König's sculpture *Abundance* (*Izobilie*), no. 1, 1883. Polytypage. COURTESY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS AT URBANA-CHAMPAIGN LIBRARY.

34 *Photozincography* is the process of making a relief engraving on a zinc plate, the process is similar to photolithography; a photoetching on zinc (Allen 211).

the beginning of the new era of fine publishing of illustrated art journals. Its editorial board was rigorously concerned about the journal's appearance, which, as the official mouthpiece of the Academy of Arts, needed to represent the Academicians' demanding tastes.

A year after *The Herald's* closure, *The Artist* (*Khudozhnik*), "the illustrated journal of fine literature and art" (as the editorial board expressed it) appeared in St Petersburg. It was published bimonthly for only two years, from 1891 to 1892, by Vasilii Avseenko (1842–1913), who was known as a writer, critic and journalist.³⁵ The journal issued literary pieces, reproduced artwork and printed art criticism. Avseenko was a non-professional in art and art criticism, but he created a journal that appears to have foreshadowed the *World of Art*, *The Golden Fleece* and *Apollo*. The future makers of the *World of Art* definitely knew about this journal and read it. Moreover, the young Léon Bakst (1866–1924), one of the designers of the *World of Art*, *The Golden Fleece* and *Apollo*, was commissioned to draw the illustrations for *The Artist*.

The Artist did not receive a specific mandate from its editorial board. However, its visual self-expression was influenced by Art Nouveau and Japonisme; images of a *femme fatale* that recalled Aubrey Beardsley or Felicien Rops's art saturated this periodical. While the names of the artists and photographers who were responsible for the reproductions of artworks were openly identified (for example, one of the main engravers of the journal was Vasilii Mate [1856–1917], one of the best engravers at the time), the names of the graphic designers remained anonymous. Determined to promote this periodical, the editorial team used art reproduction as a marketing tool. In the male-dominated realm of art consumption, they offered a bonus: a luxuriously published album, entitled *Beautiful Women* (*Krasavitsy*), which included "ten female portraits and figures executed in colour by the best Russian and foreign [Western] artists in a fine folder".³⁶

Almost simultaneously with this quasi-"decadent" periodical, *The Russian Art Archive* (*Russkii khudozhestvennyi arkhiv*), was published in Moscow by the press house of Anatolii Mamontov (1839–1905); later the *World of Art* and the first issues of *The Golden Fleece* would be issued by Mamontov's press. *The Russian Art Archive*, edited by Aleksei Novitskii (1862–1934)³⁷ was published

35 See Semen Vengerov, *Kritiko-bibliograficheskii slovar' russkikh pisatelei i uchenykh (ot nachala obrazovannosti do nashikh dnei)*, T. 1 (Sankt-Peterburg: Semen. Tipolitogr. Efrona, 1889) 91–101.

36 See the announcement in *Khudozhnik* 1 (1891).

37 Aleksei Novitskii was the art historian and the future author of the first monograph devoted to the history of Russian art: *History of Russian Art from Ancient Times in 2 volumes (Istoriia russkogo iskusstva s drevneishikh vremen v 2kh tomakh)*, first published in 1899.

from 1892 until 1894, six times per year. This periodical presented itself as an art journal focused on the study and popularization of Russia's art heritage. *The Archive* established itself as a continuation of the Academy of Arts' *Herald of the Fine Arts*, which had closed in 1890.³⁸ In contrast to *The Herald*, the new journal's focus on Russian art was supported visually by the employment of manuscript-style capitals that were reproduced from a rare handwritten book from 1694. This echoed the officially prescribed "Style Russe" widely employed in architecture and decorative arts. As an Academy-oriented art journal, it featured Academic drawings reproduced in photozincography and phototypes inserted in the text, and featured insets with photo-reproductions.³⁹

Designed for the educated elite, for both art lovers and for professionals in art criticism and history of the arts, the major art periodicals published in nineteenth-century Russia were not popular among subscribers. Their circulation was negligible. The reading audience was too small to provide the publishers with substantial profit; the demand for art periodicals was not comparable to that for illustrated popular magazines, which, as mentioned, mushroomed after 1861. The circulation of each art periodical was usually around 1,000 – 1,500 copies, while the circulation of illustrated magazines grew to 50,000 and later 200,000 copies. For example, in 1900, *The Grain Field* (*Niva*, 1869–1918, St Petersburg), the most popular illustrated periodical, generated over 250,000 copies, while the number of all "thick journals", including art periodicals, was about 90,000 copies.⁴⁰

By the beginning of the twentieth century the demand for art and any other kind elite periodicals still remained low. For example, the researchers of the Modernist periodical *The Scales* (*Vesy*), K. Azadovskii and D. Maksimov, provide the following statistics regarding the subscribers to the journal. In 1906, *The Scales* was subscribed to by 203 people who lived in St Petersburg and by 23 St Petersburg libraries (the total number of subscribers in 1906 was 845, including 93 subscribers from abroad). Only 27% of the 203 St Petersburg subscribers were Modernist literati, journalists or university professors, and just 8% were artists and musicians. The rest of the subscribers were educated elites, art dealers and collectors, high-ranking clerks and financiers and the members of the aristocracy interested in arts and literature.⁴¹

38 See editorial statement in *Russkii khudozhestvennyi arkhiv* 1 (1892) N.p.

39 "Ob"iasnenie risunkov," *Russkii khudozhestvennyi arkhiv* 1 (1892): 48.

40 Tatsumi Yukiko, "Russian Illustrated Journals in the Late Nineteenth Century: The Dual Image of Readers," *Acta Slavica Japonica* 26 (2009): 165.

41 K. Azadovskii and D. Maksimov, "Briusov i 'Vesy,'" eds. V. Bazanov et al, *Literaturnoe nasledstvo. Valerii Briusov* (Moskva: Nauka, 1976) 299–300.

The price (and affordability) of art periodicals was affected by their high quality reproductions, which were typically printed in Europe. Art reproductions were usually offered in supplements or attachments separate from the body of the periodical; aiming to increase subscriptions, however, the publisher usually announced whose artworks would be reproduced in the following issues and highlighted the quality and quantity of the journal's reproductions.

In general, the quality of reproduction in art periodicals was much higher than in the popular illustrated press, which was reflected in their higher price. For example, an annual subscription to *The Northern Light* in 1864 was 6 roubles; while in 1870 an annual subscription to *Global Illustration* (*Vsemirnaia illiustratsiia*, 1869–1898), the illustrated folio-size weekly, was sold for 8 roubles. This periodical, however, issued 52 numbers per year in comparison to the 12 issues of *The Northern Light*. Even though, in 1876, *Global Illustration* became more expensive and cost 10 roubles for 52 issues, *The Herald of Fine Arts* was even pricier – it was issued only four times per year (with the *Art News* newspaper supplement published twice a month), and its yearly subscription cost 10 roubles in 1883. It did, however, offer 20 high quality reproductions every year, made in etching, copper engraving, lithography or phototype.

The growth of the illustrated press, designed for both educated elites interested in the visual arts and less demanding consumers of cheap middlebrow magazines, and its profitability fully depended on technological progress and its achievements in the printing industries. The next section will focus on the adoption, development and role of reproduction techniques in Imperial Russia before the print revival announced by the *World of Art* and its successors.

The “Age of Mechanical Reproduction” in Russia: Reproduction Techniques in Historical Perspective

In terms of the development of visual culture, the illustrated press of various kinds played an enormous role. Readers wanted to see illustrated reportages, drawings accompanying literary works, caricatures or depictions of historical events; instead of merely reading speculative articles about certain art works, the art lover wanted to contemplate high-quality reproductions of the pieces if he or she had never had a chance to see the original or even if they had.

To satisfy the growing demand for images, the illustrated popular weeklies and monthlies employed reproduction techniques and methods very effectively; once unaffordable, with the proliferation of these techniques, the illustrated press grew in the second half of the nineteenth century. The publishers' ultimate goal was to increase their subscriptions and make the periodical

profitable; thus, they were interested in easier and cheaper means of reproduction. On the one hand, reproduction techniques were modernizing and improving, but on the other, the pursuit of lower prices, affordable for lower classes, created conditions for lower quality art reproduction.

In the early nineteenth century, metal or copper engravings were still the most common reproduction techniques. They were expensive and appeared predominantly in books and rarely in periodicals. Before Russia was introduced to the re-invented wood engraving (see below), the wood plates, *matrices* (or *clichés* as they were called in Russia)⁴² for the first Russian illustrated periodicals were not created in Russia but purchased abroad. The publisher usually acquired previously used matrices in Europe and re-used them in new contexts. In those cases, the choice of the textual material that would accompany the images was often determined by the availability of matrices with certain illustrations. Thus, the *clichés* for *The Picturesque Review* were, for example, purchased from the English illustrated periodical *The Penny Magazine* and the French *Magasin Pittoresque* and were mostly the *polytypages* that could be easily inserted into the page layout in text, which corresponded to its content to a certain degree. However, when the publisher wanted to inform the reader about subjects related to Russia, or published an illustrated book with Russian art reproductions, the matrices for these articles were specially ordered from Leipzig, London or Paris (Fig. 1.4; Fig. 1.6).⁴³ Re-using European *clichés* or ordering new blocks from abroad was a common practice for many Russian publishers up to the 1830s–40s. The publishers of illustrated editions in Moscow and St Petersburg collected a store of imported (previously used) matrices that could be re-used in various editions or re-sold to other publishing houses. This practice was common not only for periodicals; illustrated Russian books sometimes featured European engravings absolutely unrelated to the Russian text.⁴⁴ Moreover, pages with reproductions not always corresponded in size to the format of the book in which they appeared.

The modern wood engraving (*tortsovaia graviura*)⁴⁵ that made the reproduction easier and less expensive reached Russia only in 1833. It was well established in by the middle of the century. The modernization of traditional wood engraving used the much harder end-grain of the wood; thus the engraver had

42 A *matrix* is a shallow mold in which the face of a type or image is cast (Allen, 179).

43 Kask and Mokhnacheva 19.

44 This information is provided in Sidorov 249.

45 Wood engraving was modernized by Thomas Bewick (1753–1828), who contributed to the development of this technique in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.



FIGURE 1.6 Aleksandr Ivanov (engraved by Henry Robinson). The Appearance of Christ to Magdalena (Iavlenie Gospoda Magdaline), art reproduction for *The Pictures of Russian Painting (Kartiny russkoi zhivopisi)*, 1846. Steel engraving. COURTESY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA LIBRARY.

the opportunity to develop finer lines than those of traditional xylographs.⁴⁶ As Robert Verhoogt notes, “the use of wood engraving as an illustrative technique was no accident, for the major advantage of this method over other graphic techniques was the potential it offered to print text and illustration together.”⁴⁷ It was a much easier method than copper or metal engraving. Thus, from the second half of 1846, *The Illustration* boasted that the majority of its engravings were produced in Russia by domestic engravers and featured Russian themes. To increase the number of engravers, whose handicraft became in demand, the editorial board organized a wood engraving studio led by Konstantin Klodt (1807–1879) in 1847.

⁴⁶ *Xylograph* (from Greek) is a term for woodcut; widely used in Russia.

⁴⁷ Verhoogt 14.

Verhoogt describes in detail the process of making a reproduction via the method of wood engraving in the popular periodical *The Illustrated London News*. This description elucidates the general process, which was also adopted in Russia:

The popular periodical *The Illustrated London News*, for example, relied on complex interaction between its staff and various kinds of draughtsmen: special artists acted as correspondents, reporting on major events at home and abroad; the sketches they made on location were then worked up into final drawings by copyist draughtsmen; a third and separate group comprised artists who specialised in images largely unconnected with the hectic pace of news, such as art reproductions. Although these artists sometimes drew their images directly onto wooden blocks, it became possible, circa 1860, to transfer the image to the wood block using photography; this image was then engraved into the wood to create the printing matrix. A sketch was often engraved over the entire block, which was then divided into smaller blocks, for further engraving by several artists simultaneously, thereby gaining valuable time. The separate blocks were then reassembled under the watchful eye of an *artistical manager* who communicated any corrections required to the *graveur retoucheur*. Once the printing matrix was finished, it was copied and multiplied through the galvano process, creating a number of identical matrices that could be printed from simultaneously, generating enormous print runs.⁴⁸

The advantages of wood engraving, which created the conditions needed for the growth of the illustrated press, were recognized by Ksenofont Polevoi (1801–1867), the editor of *The Russian Picturesque Library* (*Zhivopisnaia russkaia biblioteka*), the St Petersburg illustrated magazine published from 1856 to 1859.⁴⁹ In his introductory article, “What is ‘The Russian Picturesque Library?’” (“Chto takoe ‘Zhivopisnaia russkaia biblioteka?’”),⁵⁰ Polevoi expressed the

48 Verhoogt 230.

49 Ksenofont Polevoi was the younger brother of the famous Nikolai Polevoi (1796–1846), known as a publisher and editor of the prominent “thick journal” *Moscow Telegraph* (*Moskovskii telegraf*), the leading literary periodical of its time. Ksenofont Polevoi participated in the *Moscow Telegraph* as an editorial assistant and after its closure (due to the censorship) he edited the already mentioned *The Picturesque Review*, whose de facto chief editor was Nikolai Polevoi. Auguste-René Semen performed as a professional typographer and the private press owner, and published this journal de jure. About this periodical see Chester M. Rzakiewicz, “N.A. Polevoi’s ‘Moscow Telegraph’ and the Journal Wars of 1825–34,” *Literary Journals in Imperial Russia*, ed. Deborah A. Martinsen (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997) 64–87.

50 Ksenofont Polevoi, “Chto takoe ‘Zhivopisnaia russkaia biblioteka?’” *Zhivopisnaia russkaia biblioteka* 1 (1856): 6.

need to reproduce images in the periodical press and books and acknowledged the significant proliferation of reproductive techniques. He also commented on difficulties that publishers encountered when aiming to reproduce images:

...now illustration has become an important requirement for a scientific or literary book, for a work devoted to geography, technology, and industry...However, illustration would not have become available to everyone if the wood engraving had not proliferated. This method of engraving is the oldest one, but it has only been significantly improved within the past several years. Not long ago, all illustrations were copper or steel engravings; these techniques were considered the best and were valued as artworks of high quality. They certainly deserve their glory, but they are too expensive, so these images cannot be reproduced for a reasonable price. Engraving on a metal plate is very hard and requires a lot of time to produce a perfect image; therefore the work cannot be finished quickly, or it cannot produce a large number of copies. This was the main reason why only a few publications featured just a limited number of engraved illustrations. Due to the proliferation of woodcuts, illustrations of various kinds can be reproduced in unlimited numbers of copies. The artist's work has now become easier, and engraving can be finished within a reasonable time. On the other hand, the cost of the work is lower, allowing more illustrated editions to be published. These editions multiply and improve every year. Only about 25 years ago, the first periodicals and illustrated magazines appeared with bad quality reproductions, which over time gradually advanced. Nowadays, some illustrated periodicals reproduce such impressive engravings that it is hard even to desire something better. In short, nowadays, any object can be illustrated both with image and text; that means that, in a book or magazine, an object is presented in both the image and its literary description or explanation.⁵¹

Polevoi's comments are significant in terms of expressing his understanding of the contemporary hunger for images among consumers of print culture and of the publishers' struggle for finding ways to fulfill the public demand by printing better quality and less expensive reproductions. New opportunities provided by re-invented wood engraving brought about a revolution within the publishing enterprise that took it to the next level of the periodical production. This engraving method advanced reproduction tremendously and signalled a new era of illustrated periodical publishing in Russia. This kind of reproduction technique made it possible to produce highly detailed images, and thousands

51 Polevoi 6.

of copies could be printed without deterioration of the blocks.⁵² As a result, the new technology moved illustrated periodical production forward. The outpouring of the illustrated magazines (and cheap *lubok* books) in the second half of the nineteenth century was, in fact, promoted by the widespread use of wood engravings and lithography, which reduced publishing costs significantly.

Lithography, another great development, invented in Germany by Alois Senefelder (1771–1834) in the late eighteenth century, was introduced in Russia in 1816⁵³ with the establishment of the first lithography shop in St Petersburg. It also created the preconditions necessary for making reproduction more versatile and affordable, even though it did not affect the periodical press immediately. If lithography experienced a boom in Europe in the 1830s–40s, in Russia, it became a widespread reproduction technique only in the 1850s. In the second half of the nineteenth century colour lithography (chromolithography), developed by the English engraver George Baxter (1804–1867) in 1835,⁵⁴ reached Russia and became the main technique used for already mentioned *lubok* books, which now employed this technique instead of expensive copper engraving. However, the scale of the use of lithography in periodical and book-making in general was much smaller than was the use of wood engraving, due to the fact that lithography could be employed for reproducing illustrations with only small text insertions, such as in the case of the *lubok* books or Timm's illustrated magazine *The Russian Art Leaflet* (Fig. 1.2). Lithography did not allow for the combination of composed typesetting and illustration; the engraver had to draw the text on the lithographic stone as the artist drew the illustration. Thus, the ability to reproduce both text and image on the same page was constrained.⁵⁵

The third revolutionary innovation in reproduction was photography. Introduced in 1822 by the Frenchman Nicéphore Niepce (1756–1833) and modernized by his student Louis-Jacques-Mandé Daguerre (1787–1851) and by William Henry Talbot (1800–1877) in the 1830s, it reached Russia in the late 1830s. In Russia, photography had its precursors: Count Aleksandr Bestuzhev-Riumin (1693–1766) had discovered that solutions of iron salts could change colour after exposure to sunlight. In 1838, the German scientist Moritz von Jacobi (Boris Iakobi, 1801–1874), who lived in Russia, invented the electrotype process, which soon was adapted for production of photographs.⁵⁶

52 M. Kholodovskaia and E. Smirnova, *Russkaia graviura* (Moskva: Izogiz, 1960) 9.

53 About lithography in Russia see A.F. Korostin, *Russkaia litografiia XIX veka* (Moskva: Iskusstvo, 1953).

54 Verhoogt 100.

55 B.N. Orlov, *Poligraficheskaiia promyshlennost' Moskvy* (Moskva: Iskusstvo, 1953) 122–123.

56 Elena Barkhatova, "The First Photographs in Russia," *Photography in Russia 1840–1940*, ed. David Elliott (Oxford: Ars Nicolai, 1992) 24.

In Russia the new medium stirred strong interest. Major newspapers and periodicals such as *The Northern Bee* (*Severnaia pchela*), *St Petersburg News* (*Sankt-Peterburgskie vedomosti*), *Notes of the Fatherland* (*Otechestvennye zapiski*), and *Library for Reading* (*Biblioteka dlia chteniia*) reacted immediately with publication of articles devoted to the invention.⁵⁷ In early 1839, the Academy of Sciences sent the scientist Joseph Hammel (Iosif Gamel', 1788–1862) on an official business trip to England to learn Talbot's method.⁵⁸ In England Hamel became acquainted with Talbot. In the same year, the first photographs in Russia were made by Karl Julius Fritzsche (Iulii Fritsshe, 1808–1871), a chemist of German origin, who was commissioned by the Academy of Sciences to study and perfect Talbot's method. His report was quite pessimistic as he considered that capabilities of the new technique were limited.⁵⁹

The first periodical devoted to the art of photography was Kukol'nik's monthly *The Daguerreotype* (*Dagerrotip*),⁶⁰ published in 1842. Kukol'nik was among the first to show an interest in the new reproduction techniques, and especially the recent invention of daguerreotype.⁶¹ One of the first articles about photography, "Daguerre's Invention" ("Otkrytie Dagerra"), was published in Kukol'nik's *Art Gazette* (*Khudozhestvennaia gazeta*, no. 2, 1840).⁶²

The second half of the nineteenth century was a time of intense study and experimentation with photographic techniques and their facility for reproduction. Photographs were not used in mass-produced illustrated periodicals due to the high cost and labour-intensiveness of the process of tipping in the photographs. *The Photographic Illustration* (*Fotograficheskaia illiustratsiia*), the periodical published in Tver and Minsk in 1863–64, however, featured this kind of illustration. In 1866, the method of photolithography⁶³ was used for the first time and the specific method of heliogravure, a type of heliography,⁶⁴ was invented by George Scamoni (Georgii Skamoni 1835–1907), a German who

57 See the bibliography of the first Russian publications about photography invention in Barkhatova, "The First Photographs in Russia".

58 David Elliott, "The Photograph in Russia: Icon of A New Age," *Photography in Russia 1840–1940*, ed. David Elliott (Oxford: Ars Nicolai, 1992) 11.

59 Barkhatova, "The First Photographs in Russia" 26. Also see Fritzsche's report in David Elliott, ed., *Photography in Russia 1840–1940* (Oxford: Ars Nicolai, 1992) 30.

60 Unfortunately no further information is found on this periodical.

61 Rydel 172.

62 Barkhatova, "The First Photographs in Russia" 27.

63 *Photolithography* is the branch of offset lithography in which the printing image or design is created by photography rather than by manual drawing directly on the plate (Allen 211).

64 *Heliography* is a photoengraver's method of fixing images made by the camera obscura; *heliogravure* is a photoengraving or print or plate produced by it (Allen 135).

worked in Russia (Fig. 1.7).⁶⁵ After *The Daguerreotype*, periodicals devoted to photography included *The Photographer* (*Fotograf*, 1864–1881) and *The Photographic Review* (*Fotograficheskoe obozrenie*, 1864–69).⁶⁶ Neither wood engraving nor lithography became a subject for periodicals. But photography that combines a scientific experiment and art gained extraordinary popularity among both specialists and amateurs.

Photographic reproduction, initially quite expensive, became more affordable by the late nineteenth century and was established, not only in specialized journals devoted to photography, but became employed by art periodicals. The *World of Art* and *The Golden Fleece* would offer their readers photographic reproductions alongside engravings, etchings and lithographs. These more expensive reproductions were protected with silk paper to reduce damage to the expensive medium.

Even though printing techniques proliferated and press houses multiplied in late Imperial Russia, many customers still preferred to place orders for the printing of reproductions and various commercial productions such as advertisements, wrappings, packaging boxes and bureaucratic documentation in Leipzig. In Germany, printing was cheaper, more versatile and of higher quality. Besides the lower price, the import of printed productions to Russia was duty-free and therefore more attractive to the majority of customers who placed their orders abroad. Import duties were introduced only in 1886, which led to less competition with the Russian print market. Engaged in a severe rivalry with European publishers, Russian counterparts strove to lessen the expenses of mass printing and employed newer technologies (mostly engine-presses) that were also imported from Western Europe, predominantly from Germany. Even by 1900, only one sixth of the total number of press machines was produced in Russia; the rest were imported.⁶⁷

Thus, competition with imported print productions forced Russian printers to increase their own domestic print initiatives. The development of printing technologies became a primary focus of the new professional biweekly *The Survey of Graphic Arts: the Magazine of Printing* (*Obzor graficheskikh iskusstv: Zhurnal pechatnogo dela*, 1878–1885), a periodical devoted to reproduction techniques and printing. It was published in St Petersburg by the press house of R. Schneider and later by Hoppe. The periodical issued 24 numbers per year and was designed exclusively for professional typographers and publishers and

65 Kask and Mokhnacheva 28–29.

66 Elena Barkhatova, "Realism and Document: Photography as Fact," *Photography in Russia 1840–1940*, ed. David Elliott (Oxford: Ars Nicolai, 1992) 41–50.

67 Orlov 141–146; 147–156; 164.

was meant to provide them with new information about printing technologies. According to the editor's statement, the publication of such a periodical was meant to improve the domestic printing industry.⁶⁸ *The Survey* published Russian translations of articles devoted to reproduction techniques (such as wood engraving, lithography, or photography), the art of binding, official decrees related to the publishing industry, and historical articles devoted to famous printers and publishers. It reproduced images, which represented examples of different reproduction techniques printed in various press houses (Fig. 1.7). This periodical also advertised a number of printing industry services: the reader would find information about type foundries, press houses, typographic and lithographic machines and presses. The effect of the appearance of such a periodical is hard to overestimate, because it stimulated the development of domestic printing and the subsequent proliferation of illustrated press and art reproduction.

After the economic crisis of 1881–1882, book and periodical production decreased in comparison to previous decades; but by the 1890s, technological progress resumed and facilitated publishing enterprises. However, as a whole, the growth of book production from 1880 to 1889 was only 14.4%, while in 1864 to 1880, book and periodical production increased fourfold.⁶⁹ Rotary presses were introduced, which meant mechanization of the process of typesetting. The first rotary press was installed in 1878 in St Petersburg, and by 1896, in Moscow alone, 12 such presses were working. To replace hand colouring, chromolithography was widely employed, and photozincography for cheaper image preparation became available in the 1880s. These technological improvements accelerated the end of manually operated lithography workshops. In the 1890s, the linotype machine,⁷⁰ which made typesetting five times faster, was introduced. All these innovations made illustrations easily reproducible and inexpensive and publications geared for mass consumption dominated the industry. The reduction in prices, however, led to the lowering of the quality of reproductions in both books and periodicals of all genres and for all categories of readers, which almost destroyed fine book production.⁷¹ *The World of Art*, a pioneer of fine periodical publishing, would appear in the midst

68 "Ot redaktsii," *Obzor graficheskikh iskusstv* 1 (1878): 1.

69 Orlov 176.

70 *Linotype machine* is a typesetting machine, which sets matter or solid lines. It is used generally for newspaper and periodical composition and for books (Allen 166).

71 Miranda Remnek, "Pre-Revolutionary Russian Publishing," *Books in Russia and the Soviet Union. Past and Present*, ed. Miranda Beaven Remnek (Weisbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1991) 44–45.



FIGURE 1.7 *Art reproduction from I. H. Ville's copper engraving for The Survey of Graphic Arts: the Magazine of Printing (Obzor graficheskikh iskusstv: Zhurnal pechatnogo dela), March, 1878. Photograph according to G. Scamoni's method. COURTESY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS AT URBANA-CHAMPAIGN LIBRARY.*

of this reign of cheap illustrated magazines, with poor reproduction techniques, addressed to the mass market.

The Periodical Personalised: Cover Pages and Binding

As any other product of print culture, the periodical comes to its reader in its material form, the thresholds, which the reader crosses before obtaining the textual information. The outer packaging of the book or periodical consists of many layers including jacket, binding, cover page, fly-leaf, title page, and other elements that the reader needs to decode before entering the text and its inner

paratextual components, such as colophons, sub-titles or illustrations. The cover and binding, however, are the first and immediate physical gates that invite the reader to enter the space of the book. This section is devoted to bindings and covers and their functions in the nineteenth-century periodical culture.

The vast majority of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century periodical covers did not survive the binding and re-binding of the journals. In 1924, Sergei Makovskii (1877–1962), the editor of *Apollo*, would note that cover pages are “short-lived and are necessary only for the advertisement of the periodical. The cover page is needed only in the window of the book store; however, when you bind the volume, you never know what to do with the cover”.⁷² Even in the early twentieth century, periodical covers served for advertising and protection. Often created by the best graphic designers, they nevertheless were underestimated as art works and discarded by the readers and even publishers themselves; thus many valuable cover pages are now lost.

The earliest Russian periodicals had covers that fulfilled only a protective function. The typical periodical cover was usually made of simple cheap grey or blue paper that literally covered the brochures of printed pages; it was often not cut and lacked any periodical identification. Such a cover was called a “wrapper” (*obertka*) and was meant to be discarded after the periodical’s arrival. In time, the “wrapper” was transformed into the cover page and bore the printed title of the periodical.

Typically, the cover pages contained information about the periodical and just repeated the title page. One of the first cover pages decorated with a vignette appeared only in 1792 in the Moscow periodical *A Solution for Idleness* (*Delo ot bezdel'ia*); while one of the first illustrative covers was printed in the nineteenth century for the magazine *Aurora* (*Avrora*), published in 1805–06 in Moscow. It depicted an illustration that accompanied a tale found within this periodical.⁷³

Imagining the original look of the *World of Art*, *The Golden Fleece* and *Apollo* and their predecessors is a difficult task for today’s scholar. In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, periodicals still arrived to their subscribers in heavy paper covers. After collecting a half-year or a whole-year run of the journal, the subscriber would send it to the bookbinder in order to have the separate issues bound into a volume. Each subscriber combined the volume chronologically and the cover, even if it was richly decorated and designed by a famous artist, was often discarded. Fortunately not every subscriber threw

72 Sergei Makovskii, *Grafika M.V. Dobuzhinskogo* (Berlin: Petropolis, 1924) 38.

73 Kask and Mokhnacheva 10–11.

away the cover pages. In some cases the bookbinder would bind the cover pages at the back of the volume or use them to divide the issues put in the same volume.

Sometimes other sections, such as advertisements or even title pages and other unwanted (also paratextual) parts of the journal were also discarded; the reproductions, especially the original etchings, photographs or lithographs in the insets, could be taken out to be framed and put on the wall or become part of an album or portfolio that would be preserved separately. Sections of the periodical, such as the Chronicle or Literary Almanac that often had separate pagination, could be bound after the main body of the periodical, so the volume would consist of two parts: the journal as such and the Chronicle section from the first half of the year (or the whole year, sometimes) compiled into a “journal in a journal”. Or these sections could be bound in separate volumes. All this depended on the subscriber’s personal taste. This means that each extant instance of a journal published in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries is unique due to the personalized arrangement of the articles and art reproductions in the volume. This fact complicates, to a certain degree, the study of periodical culture, as today’s reader is rarely able to see the journal in its original material form.

The binding, as the most material part of the periodical (or book), was also highly personalized to meet the owner’s preferences. Sometimes, binding might be ordered from the publisher (Fig. 1.8), or it would be crafted in a private binding shop. Usually the entire run of the periodical was bound in the same style, with the same backing, identification of the title, the volume number, and year of publication. The subscriber might choose from a number of available types of cases. The choices varied from cardboard covered with monochromatic or marbled paper with calico back and outer corners to expensive leather cases with gilded edges and engraved golden inscriptions, with stamped or lithographed ornamental flyleaves. Sometimes the binding would be made of cloth with gilded or painted stamping. Some bibliophiles engraved their *ex-libris* on the cover or put it on a flyleaf. Others would add a silver monogram, giving the volume the look of an exquisite piece of decorative art. All these preferences depended on how much subscribers valued the journal or book that they wanted to preserve and how they cared for their personal library and, indeed, how much they could afford to spend.

The Golden Fleece in the Frick Art Reference Library in New York, for example, is dressed in an elegant gilded leather back with outer corners and covers of marbled cardboard (Fig. 1.9). *Apollo* in the library at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign features a graceful ornamental Art Nouveau cover (Fig. 1.10). The full run of *The Olden Years* (*Starye gody*, 1907–1916) preserved in



FIGURE 1.8
The Global Illustration (*Vsemirnaia illiustratsiia*), 1876. *Leather, gold lettering on paper.*
COURTESY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF
ILLINOIS AT URBANA-CHAMPAIGN LIBRARY.



FIGURE 1.9
The Golden Fleece (*Zolotoe runo*), 1906–1909. *Leather, gilded stamping and marbled cover.*
COURTESY OF THE FRICK ART REFERENCE LIBRARY.



FIGURE 1.10
Apollo (Apollon), 1909–1917.
COURTESY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF
ILLINOIS AT URBANA-CHAMPAIGN
LIBRARY.

the library at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign is bound in expensive leather cases with gilded edges and stamping (Fig. 1.11). In practical terms, the gilded edges prevented dust from penetrating between the pages, so the book could be kept on the bookshelf safely for a long time. The expensive leather binding with gilded stamping made the price of the book (and periodical) much higher than the original cost, when it became a second-hand book-seller's commodity. This kind of exquisite binding was handmade only. In the late nineteenth century, the mass production of binding was well established; however, it remained suitable only for books, while periodicals that arrived to subscribers as paperback issues could be bound only manually.⁷⁴

The personalization of periodicals through their binding disappeared after the revolution of 1917, when binding became a sign of bourgeois taste; the early Soviet art periodicals were published in paperback covers and were bound, only in libraries, into simple cases to prevent damage. Binding as a kind of decorative art for private libraries gradually faded, being replaced by mass binding by the publisher. For books, this practice is common nowadays and so home and public libraries preserve books in the non-individualized bindings from the same publishers. But each library still binds yearly runs of periodicals together for library users' convenience, in reference to a tradition set up a long time ago.

74 See the details of binding history and practice in V.I. Anisimov, *Knizhnyi pereplet. Kratkii konspekt po istorii i tekhnike perepletnogo dela* (Peterburg: Gosudarstvennoe izdatel'stvo, 1921); L.N. Simonov, *Perepletnoe masterstvo i iskusstvo ukrasheniia perepleta* (Sankt-Peterburg: Tipografiia E. Evdokimova, 1897); Mikhail Seslavinskii, *Aromat knizhnogo perepleta. Otechestvennyi individual'nyi pereplet XIX–XX vekov* (Moskva: Astrel', 2008).

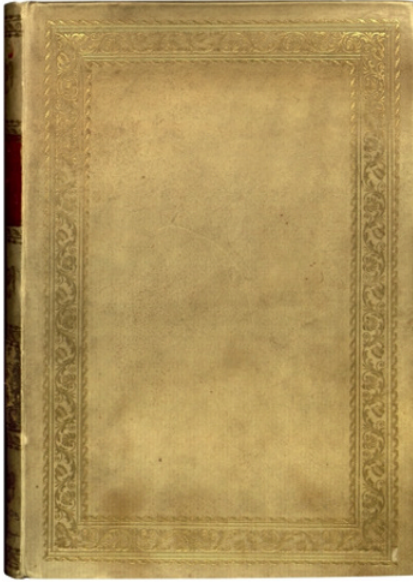


FIGURE 1.11

The Olden Years (*Starye gody*), 1907–1916.
 Leather, gilded ornamental stamping.

COURTESY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF
 ILLINOIS AT URBANA-CHAMPAIGN LIBRARY.

The Periodical Press and Censorship

This section does not target the look of the journals or questions of their paratextual packaging; rather it focuses on officially prescribed publishing rules in late Imperial Russia. It briefly elucidates the censorship conditions in which the *World of Art*, *The Golden Fleece* and *Apollo* were published.

In the late nineteenth century, all publications, including the illustrated magazines and art journals, were fully dependent on censorship regulations. When censorship was introduced in 1804,⁷⁵ it continuously affected the Russian publishing enterprise until its relaxation in 1905. The reign of Alexander III (r. 1881–1894) was marked by the reinforcement of censorship laws.⁷⁶ From 1881 the governor-generals were granted the right to terminate periodicals. This resulted in the closure of the democratic periodical *Notes of the Fatherland* (*Otechestvennye zapiski*) in 1884.⁷⁷ Furthermore, the late nineteenth century

75 The first Censorship Decree was declared in 1804. See the text of the Decree in *Russkaia zhurnalistika v dokumentakh. Istoriia nadzora*, ed. B.I. Esin and Ia. N. Zasurskii (Moskva: Aspekt Press, 2003) 96–103.

76 See in detail Chapter VII in Daniel Balmuth, *Censorship in Russia, 1865–1905* (Washington, DC: UP of America, 1979).

77 Orlov 174–175.

was marked by rigorous censorship under the control of Konstantin Pobedonostsev (1827–1907), head of the Holy Synod from 1880.

In 1895, seventy-eight writers signed a petition to Nicholas II (r. 1894–1917), asking for changes to the censorship regime; the petition was, however, denied. In 1898, writers submitted a new petition that asked for a reexamination of the laws for the press, which also remained unsatisfied.⁷⁸ Only the revolution of 1905 and the release of the Manifesto of October 17, 1905, which led to Pobedonostsev's dismissal, resulted in relaxation of censorship laws. This introduced a new phase of publishing, especially of politically oriented brochures, magazines, and newspapers. The publication of satirical periodicals greatly increased.⁷⁹

Like any other publication, the *World of Art* also obtained permission for publication from the censorship committee (there is a note in the periodical that acknowledges this), and was published, in fact, during a time of rigorous censorship. However, it is known that from 1900, the periodical was published with the tsar's personal subsidy, granted to the journal by Nicholas II himself, and likely was censored less strictly. *The Golden Fleece* was published after 1905, so its first issue proudly published a cycle of poetry by Valerii Briusov, which could not have been published earlier due to its overt eroticism.⁸⁰ After 1907, censorship was reintroduced and new, relatively mild, regulations were promulgated.⁸¹ *Apollo* was published through the turmoil of World War I, when, in 1914, very strict censorship rules were implemented. They were abolished only after the February revolution of 1917.⁸²

78 Balmuth 111–112.

79 The administrative machinery of censorship in the nineteenth century was complicated and multifaceted. By 1863 censorship was under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Education (*Ministerstvo narodnogo prosveshcheniia*), and, thereafter, – under the Ministry of Inner Affairs. From 1865 to 1917, the main censorship administration was the Main Office of Press (*Glavnoe upravlenie po delam pechati*). The church censorship was under the jurisdiction of the Holy Synod and theatrical censorship under the jurisdiction of the III Department of Emperor's Chancellery (1828–1865). D.A. Badalian et al. *U mysli stoia na chasakh... Tsenzory Rossii i tsenzura* (Sankt-Peterburg: Izd-vo Sankt-Peterburgskogo universiteta, 2000) 17.

80 The discussion of the cycle follows in Chapter 3.

81 A.V. Likhomanov, "Trebovaniia k redaktoram periodicheskikh izdaniia kak element tsenzurnoi politiki Rossii v 1905–1917 gg.," *Knizhnoe delo v Rossii v XIX-nachale XX veka*, eds. O. Il'ina, N. Patrusheva and I. Frolova (Sankt-Peterburg: Rossiiskaia natsional'naia biblioteka, 2008) 80–81.

82 Likhomanov 85–86.

Conclusion

Before Russia learned to reproduce art and publish exquisite art periodicals, it had to go through a print revolution, gain experience in publishing the first illustrated magazines (with matrices purchased abroad) and printing art journals – without art reproductions. Illustrated magazines became very important for the development of visual culture, delivering visual information and illustrated reportages from distant locations.

The main technique of reproduction in the eighteenth and the first half of the nineteenth century was copper and metal engraving; lithography was introduced in Russia in 1816 and wood engraving was reinvented in about 1833. By the 1850s, wood engraving gradually displaced copper engraving, advancing reproduction possibilities; the invention of photography marked another step in the development of reproduction. The popular illustrated periodicals employed various types of reproduction techniques that reinforced the development of the printing industry in Russia. This happened due to specific conditions, i.e., when high quality reproductions were still ordered from abroad and when prices for printing and quality were more competitive. The development of the Russian domestic printing industry, concerned primarily with the reduction of printing costs, ironically worsened the quality of reproductions in both books and periodicals. This almost destroyed fine press printing.

Although the technology of printing had come a long way in one hundred years, the *World of Art* would appear under circumstances that seemed unfavourable to fine publishing. Nevertheless, inspired by the Western European print revival, it would set out to transform the periodical into an art object, whose materiality, appearance and quality of reproductions would rival the textual message.

***World of Art* and the Origins of the Print Revival in Late Imperial Russia**

The introductory chapter outlined the history of art reproduction and art publishing in nineteenth-century Imperial Russia. This chapter will focus on the first issue of the *World of Art* (*Mir Iskusstva*), a new type of art journal that appeared on the eve of the twentieth century and established new standards for art publishing, art reproduction and graphic design (fig. 2.1). This journal became a disseminator of the new European taste in art and established itself as a model of book craftsmanship; all subsequent Russian art journals devoted to contemporary art and design would emulate the *World of Art* or refer to it as a benchmark.

Closely associated with the World of Art group of artists, the art periodical was launched in 1898 and published in St Petersburg between 1899 and 1904 by the Hoppe press house and was edited by Sergei Diaghilev (1872–1929) and, during the last year of publication, by Diaghilev and Alexandre Benois (1870–1960) together. This journal appeared monthly and was financed by Savva Mamontov (1841–1918) and Princess Mariia Tenisheva (1858–1928) during the first year of publication and, in 1900–1904, received the tsar's personal subsidy and in addition to endowments from private sponsors. Twelve volumes appeared; each consisted of 6 issues (all the issues published in 1899 and some issues of 1900–1904 were double issues, i.e. nos. 1–2, nos. 3–4, nos. 5–6, etc.).

During the first months of publishing, the journal's units included the following: the Art Section (*Khudozhestvennyi otdel*), Art Industry (*Khudozhestvenno-promushlennyi otdel*) and the Art Chronicle (*Khudozhestvennaia khronika*). Initially, however, there were no clearly identified demarcations between sections; the articles were published one after another (the exception being the Art Chronicle, which functioned as a journal in a journal with separate pagination). Beginning with issue number 5 in 1901, a Survey of Foreign Periodicals (*Obzor inostrannykh izdaniï*) appeared. This section featured art reproductions from European art journals such as *Die Kunst*, *The Magazine of Art*, *The Artist*, *Gazette des beaux arts*, and others.

In the beginning, writers published their essays exclusively in the Art Chronicle section, but starting with the combined nos. 7–8 in 1899, the journal featured fiction, philosophical essays, and studies in literary criticism and aesthetics in the main body of the periodical. This was called the Literary Section (*Literaturnyi otdel*) only with no. 6, 1900, and was edited by



FIGURE 2.1 *Konstantin Korovin. Cover page for the World of Art (Mir Iskusstva), no. 1, 1899.*
COURTESY OF THE FRICK ART REFERENCE LIBRARY.

Dmitrii Filosofov (1872–1940). The literature section published aesthetical-philosophical essays and treatises written by the Symbolist writers Dmitrii Merezhkovskii (1865–1941), Zinaida Gippius (1869–1945), Vasilii Rozanov (1856–1919), Lev Shestov (1866–1938), and others, and sometimes featured fiction or poetry.

After the *World of Art*¹ was conceived in 1897 and launched in 1898, a group of artists associated with Diaghilev's exhibits (description follows) appropriated the journal's name for themselves. Scholars usually discuss the journal and the group together, referring to the journal as the mouthpiece of the group and focusing mainly on their texts and aesthetic views or, alternatively, on the artists' works. They do not analyze the journal with respect to its materiality, its function as an art object, or its visual message. This chapter will be devoted to the first, "inaugural", issues of the *World of Art*, namely, numbers 1–2 and 3–4, 1899 (likely released within a short interval of each other), which contained an editorial mission statement defining the program and goals of the journal.

The *World of Art* in Scholarship

In the USSR, the *World of Art*'s artwork was generally considered bourgeois and harmful for several decades (the 1930s–1950s) and was largely overlooked by researchers. The first monographs devoted to the *World of Art* members and their oeuvre began appearing in the late 1950s–1960s. The first monograph devoted to the movement was A. Gusarova's 1972 book.² It discussed Diaghilev's manifesto for the Russian arts published in the *World of Art* but analyzed it as a group program, while the journal was described only briefly.

After the publication of Camilla Gray's seminal book, *The Great Experiment: Russian Art 1863–1922* in 1962 (which included a chapter on the *World of Art*),³ interest in Russian art grew steadily among Western scholars. Academic curiosity arose in the 1970s and resulted in several dissertations about the *World of Art* followed by monographs. The pioneering dissertations, whose authors fully identified the art association with the journal, were by William Cox⁴ (1970) and Penelope Carson⁵ (1974). In Cox's work, the *World of Art* occupies a modest place despite its prominence in the title. Only a third of the discussion is devoted to group members (predominantly Benois's views, Diaghilev's inaugural article in the first issues and Igor Grabar's [1871–1960] art criticism). Carson's work, by contrast, was a more comprehensive study of the group that

1 In my discussion I italicize the title of the journal only – the *World of Art*; in regard to the group, the regular font is used.

2 A.P. Gusarova, *"Mir Iskusstva"* (Leningrad: Khudozhnik RSFSR, 1972).

3 Camilla Gray, *The Great Experiment: Russian Art 1863–1922* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1962).

4 William Cox, "The Art World and Mir Iskusstva: Studies in the Development of Russian Art, 1890–1905," PhD diss., U of Michigan, 1970.

5 Penelope Carson, "Russian Art in the Silver Age: The Role of 'Mir Iskusstva,'" PhD diss., Indiana U, 1974.

featured a separate chapter devoted to the journal, its editorial meetings, aesthetic views and graphic design.

In 1977, almost simultaneously, two more detailed monographs were published in the USSR and the USA by Nataliia Lapshina⁶ and Janet Kennedy⁷ respectively. Both works remain important reference sources about the group. Lapshina has a chapter devoted to the journal, in which she reviews its main directions, its aesthetic views and Diaghilev's manifesto. In her work, Kennedy also focuses mostly on the group and discusses in detail the journal's publication as one of the group's undertakings. In relation to the periodical, she delineates the editorial board and analyzes Diaghilev's program. Another major and detailed publication devoted to the *World of Art* was John Bowl's study (1979).⁸ This work includes a chapter devoted to the journal and explores the journal as the foundation for the group of artists.

The first high quality art reproduction album with a survey of the movement and biographical essays about the artists of the group in Russian and English was Vsevolod Petrov's book.⁹ It was a re-issuing of his earlier publication printed in 1975,¹⁰ which was now richly illustrated. Among the most recent publications dedicated to the group is the English translation of The Russian State Museum catalogue of the exhibit *Mir Iskusstva: Russia's Age of Elegance* (2005).¹¹ It features four articles that place the group (and journal) in the context of music, literature and modern Russian art culture. Another contribution is the latest survey devoted to the group (and partially to the journal) by Galina El'shevskaia (2008).¹² Both these works are designed mostly for the general reader.

Interest in the periodical the *World of Art* as a subject in its own right arose in the 1980s with a collective monograph *Literary Process and Russian Journalism of the Late Nineteenth – Early Twentieth Centuries. 1890–1904* (*Literaturnyi protsess i russkaia zhurnalistika kontsa XIX – nachala XX veka. 1890–1904*) devoted to the Modernist press, which was published in Russia (1982). This work

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- 6 Nataliia Lapshina, *"Mir Iskusstva". Ocherki istorii i tvorcheskoi praktiki* (Moskva: Iskusstvo, 1977).
 - 7 Janet Kennedy, *The "Mir Iskusstva" Group and Russian Art 1898–1912* (New York & London: Garland Publishing, Inc., 1977).
 - 8 John Bowl, *The Silver Age: Russian Art of the Early Twentieth Century and the "World of Art" Group* (Newtonville: Oriental Research, 1982). This work was first published in 1979.
 - 9 Vsevolod Petrov, *Russian Art Nouveau. The World of Art and Diaghilev's Painters* (Bournemouth: Parkstone Press, 1998). See the Russian version: Vsevolod Petrov, *Mir Iskusstva. Khudozhestvennoe ob"edinenie nachala XX veka* (Moskva: Avror, 1997).
 - 10 Vsevolod Petrov, *Mir Iskusstva* (Leningrad: Izobrazitel'noe iskusstvo, 1975).
 - 11 Greg Guroff et al., *Mir Iskusstva. Russia's Age of Elegance* (St Petersburg: The State Russian Museum – Palace Editions, 2005).
 - 12 Galina El'shevskaia, *"Mir Iskusstva,"* (Moskva: Belyi gorod, 2008).

included a chapter by Irina Koretskaia dedicated specifically to the *World of Art*, its literary section and the collaboration between the writers and artists on the editorial board.¹³ In the West, William E. Harkins's similar article concerned with the journal's literary content, appeared in an anthology in 1997.¹⁴

Alongside the growing interest in the World of Art group, the last few decades have seen several works devoted to Russian book and periodical design. Two survey articles, by Mikhail Kiselev¹⁵ and Janet Kennedy,¹⁶ published in 1989 and 1999 respectively, explored the graphic design of the Russian art periodicals of the turn of the century, and the *World of Art* in particular. Elena Chernevich's book (1990) featured a brief chapter on the graphic art of the World of Art artists (Chapter 3);¹⁷ and finally, in 2008 Anna Winestein devoted an article to the group's revolutionary approach to design and graphic art.¹⁸

The aforementioned literature on both the World of Art group and the art journal creates a solid contextual base for further analysis of the periodical. Despite the wide range of studies on the World of Art, the journal as an art object, its creators' approach to art reproduction, and the correspondence between words and images remain largely unnoticed by scholars. This chapter offers a discussion of the art journal and its materiality, visual message and word-image intermediality.

Emergence of the *World of Art* in the Cultural-Historical Context

The *World of Art* appeared in a complicated socio-historical context with multifaceted cultural conditions; its first issues and exhibits encountered the severe criticism of opponents and the acute disappointment of the public. Uniting like-minded people, who worked together for several decades and who were disseminating the new ideas, the *World of Art* announced the arrival of Modernism in late Imperial Russia, which was still under the spell of the Realism

13 I. Koretskaia, "Mir Iskusstva," *Literaturnyi protsess i russkaia zhurnalistika kontsa XIX – nachala XX veka. 1890–1904*, ed. V.A. Bialik (Moskva: Nauka, 1982) 129–178.

14 William Harkins, "The Literary Content of *The World of Art*," *Literary Journals in Imperial Russia*, ed. Deborah A. Martinsen (Cambridge University Press, 1997) 197–206.

15 Mikhail Kiselev, "Graphic Design and Russian Art Journals of the Early Twentieth Century," *The Journal of Decorative and Propaganda Arts* 11/2 (1989): 50–67.

16 Janet Kennedy, "The World of Art and Other Turn-of-the-Century Russian Art Journals, 1898–1910," *Defining Russian Graphic Arts*, ed. Alla Rosenfeld (New Brunswick, New Jersey, and London: Rutgers University Press, 1999) 63–78.

17 Elena Chernevich, *Russian Graphic Design* (New York: Abbeville Publishers, 1990).

18 Anna Winestein, "Quiet Revolutionaries: The 'Mir Iskusstva' Movement and Russian Design," *Journal of Design History* 21/4 (2008): 315–333.

of the Wanderers (*Peredvizhniki*) and created the artistic pre-conditions for the future popularity of the Russian arts in the West. The first part of this chapter will elucidate the cultural circumstances in which the periodical appeared; it will focus on the main figures, who participated in the journal; and it will explain the journal's aesthetic vision. The chapter will also discuss the journal makers' understanding of the importance of images in text and their word/image interrelation in communication with the readers and viewers.

The Art Periodical Press before the World of Art: Art and Art Industry

Russian art periodicals in the nineteenth century were examined in the previous chapter. Here the discussion continues and focuses on the elucidation of the context of the contemporary art-periodical press of late Imperial Russia in which the *World of Art* appeared. To better understand its innovative ideas it is necessary to see it against the background of the art journal *Art and Art Industry* (*Iskusstvo i khudozhestvennaia promyshlennost'*, 1898–1902) (fig. 2.2) that appeared concurrently and was launched only a few months before the *World of Art* and was tied closely with the Realist movement of the Wanderers (*Peredvizhniki*). *Art and Art Industry* and the *World of Art* represented two opposite camps that had a complicated relationship. It is important to make note of this rivalry because the *World of Art* sought to oppose itself to *Art and Art Industry*.



FIGURE 2.2 Cover and back of *Art and Art Industry* (*Iskusstvo i khudozhestvennaia promyshlennost'*), 1899.

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AT URBANA-CHAMPAIGN LIBRARY.

Art and Art Industry appeared in 1898, four years after the closure of the already mentioned *Russian Art Archive*. Initiated in St Petersburg by the Society for Encouragement of the Arts (*Obshchestvo pooshchreniia khudozhestv*),¹⁹ it was a folio-sized monthly that was issued without censorship limitations²⁰ and edited by the art historian Nikolai Sobko (1851–1906),²¹ the Secretary of the Society. Sobko's views were highly influenced by Vladimir Stasov (1824–1906), the self-appointed art and music critic of the second half of the nineteenth century, who also actively participated in writing for the journal. Stasov, one of the most influential critics in late Imperial Russia at the time, was an advocate of the aesthetics of Realism and the Wanderers.

The Wanderers (*Peredvizhniki*), members of the Association of Travelling Exhibits (*Tovarishchestvo peredvizhnykh vystavok*), had been organized in 1870. They were former students of the St Petersburg Academy of Arts.²² In 1863, fourteen rebels had refused to compete for a Gold Medal and paint on the topic of Scandinavian mythology – and left the Academy. They organized the

19 The Society for Encouragement of the Arts was established in 1821. It was a progressive society that in its manifesto announced the following program: "By all possible means to help the artists who show their talent and skill and ability to disseminate all kinds of fine arts; with valuable publications to please the public". It helped self artists to obtain freedom and supported them with stipends to enter the Academy of Arts. In 1824 the Society instituted three Gold medals for those artists who were not affiliated with the Academy of Arts. The recipients received a chance to study in Rome. In 1825 the Society organized the Public Exhibit of Russian Artworks. It was the first permanent public art show, while the Hermitage was not easily accessible and the Academy of Arts opened its venues only once in a year for two weeks. Finally, in 1839, the Society financed the First St Petersburg School of drawing for all the estates. See P.N. Stolpianskii, *Staryi Peterburg i Obshchestvo pooshchreniia khudozhestv* (Leningrad: Izdanie komiteta popularizatsii khudozhestvennykh izdani, 1928).

20 *Art and Art Industry* initiated by the Society after obtaining the emperor's, Nicholas II, permission for publication was, in fact, allowed for publication without censorship.

21 In 1893–99, Sobko published the Wanderers' biographies in his 3-volume *Dictionary of Russian Artists* (*Slovar' russkikh khudozhnikov*); among his other notable publications were *The Illustrated Catalogue of the All-Russian Exhibit in Moscow in 1882* (*Illustrirovannyi katalog Vserossiiskoi vystavki v Moskve v 1882 g.*) and the catalogues of the Wanderers' travelling exhibits.

22 The Academy of Fine Arts in St Petersburg was founded in 1757 by the Empress Elizaveta Petrovna (Peter I's daughter) and Catherine II. The Academy's gold medal recipients became "pencioners" at state treasury and travelled abroad, Rome and Paris. About the Academy in detail see: Irina Tatarinova, "'The Pedagogic Power of the Master': The Studio System at the Imperial Academy of Fine Arts in St Petersburg," *The Slavonic and East European Review* 83 / 3 (2005): 470–489; *Russkaia akademicheskaia khudozhestvennaia shkola v XVIII veke* (Moskva – Leningrad: OGIZ – Gosudarstvennoe sotsial'no-ekonomicheskoe izdatel'stvo, 1934); V.G. Lisovskii, *Akademiia khudozhestv. Istoriko-iskusstvovedcheskii ocherk* (Leningrad: Lenizdat, 1982).

St Petersburg Association of Artists (*Sanktpeterburgskaia artel' khudozhnikov*), which later was transformed into the Association of Travelling Exhibits. Influenced by Nikolai Chernyshevskii's (1828–1889) views, the Wanderers, opposing themselves to the Academicism and official Classicism prescribed by the Academy of Arts, announced the new aesthetic of Realism and devoted their artworks to social equality and justice. The heyday of their activity was the period from the 1870s to the 1890s; they dominated Russian art life at the moment the World of Art appeared.²³ Although once avant-garde, by the late nineteenth century the Wanderers, themselves, had become the entrenched Academicians, unresponsive toward all new trends.

Art and Art Industry, which consciously chose not to be printed abroad, was produced in the Golike press house in St Petersburg.²⁴ This initiative resulted in lower-quality art reproduction than was offered by the art journals of the Academy of Arts as discussed in the previous chapter. The phototypes²⁵ of greyish or brownish colour had fuzzy contours, so some elements of the paintings were hardly distinguishable (fig. 2.3). The journal makers were interested in art reproduction, but their emphasis was clearly not on the periodical as an art object in its own right.

The opening editorial article, "What Did the Russian Art Periodicals of 1807–1897 Represent?" ("Chto predstaviali iz sebia russkie khudozhestvennye zhurnaly 1807–1897?")²⁶ (fig. 2.4), was an incomplete survey of the Russian illustrated magazines and art periodicals of the nineteenth century and their programs. It featured a short description of major texts published in art journals before *Art and Art Industry*.²⁷

23 For more about the Wanderers see: Elizabeth Valkenier, *Russian Realist Art. State and Society: The Peredvizhniki and Their Tradition*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 1989).

24 "Ot redaktsii," *Iskusstvo i khudozhestvennaia promyshlennost'* 1 (1898): 6.

25 *Art and Art Industry*'s journal board gained an exclusive permission to reproduce the artwork from the Imperial collection and was recommended for the libraries of educational institutions for subscription ("Ot redaktsii" 4).

26 Sobko 7–32.

27 Unfortunately, Sobko did not discuss *The Herald* or *The Archive* and did not provide any analysis of their publications. The neglect of these periodicals seems quite deliberate, because it is not possible that Sobko did not read or subscribe to them. The reason for such negation can be explained as a deteriorated relationship between the Society and Academy. If, at the moment of its establishment the Society for Encouragement of the Arts supported the Academy of Arts providing the *pensionnaires* to Rome and Paris for Academy graduates, by the end of the nineteenth century, the Society opposed itself and its democratic intentions to the increasingly rigid and stagnant Academy (see Severiukhin and Leikind, *Zolotoi vek* 179–183). Moreover, Stasov usually expressed hostility toward the

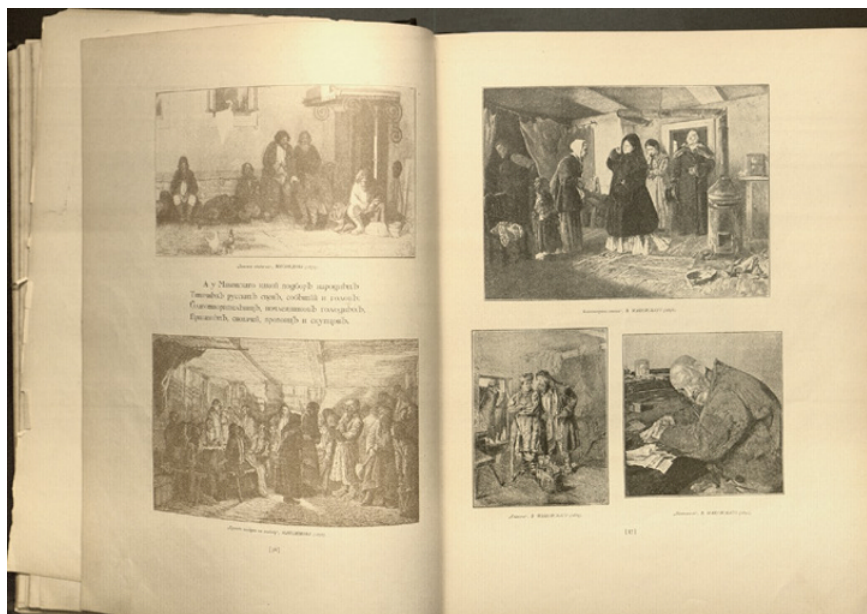


FIGURE 2.3 Art reproductions in *Art and Art Industry (Iskusstvo i khudozhestvennaia promyshlennost')*, no. 1, 1899.

COURTESY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS AT URBANA-CHAMPAIGN LIBRARY.

The cover page (fig. 2.2) was meant to resemble an old manuscript's decorated leather cover with imitations of ancient fasteners and a seal on the back (the reproduction shows the cover and back bound together). The editorial board stated that they reproduced the images from old Slavic manuscripts preserved in private collections.²⁸ The illuminated initials and vignettes represented colourful reproductions from old hand-written books with their rich use of gilding. These replicas clearly implied the "national idea" (fig. 2.4) proclaimed by the aforementioned Stasov, who was the main champion of a national revival in the Russian arts. In 1887, he published his three volumes of *Slavic and Eastern Ornaments from Ancient and Modern Manuscripts (Slavianskii i vostochnyi ornament po rukopisiam drevniago i novago vremeni)*.²⁹ Expressing ethnographic interest, Stasov himself and more than 48 artists copied the ornaments for this Russian-French edition. With the publication of this survey

Academy, which might also influence Sobko's opinion. All these reflect the complex situation in the Russian art milieu in the late nineteenth – early twentieth centuries.

²⁸ "Ot redaktsii" 6.

²⁹ Chernevich 19.



FIGURE 2.4 Art and Art Industry (*Iskusstvo i khudozhestvennaia promyshlennost'*), no. 1, 1899. Vignette on the left copied from the illustrated manuscript *The Illuminated Apocalypse* (*Litsevoi apokalipsis*), 16th century, from private collection of F. Buslaev. Title vignette for N. Sobko's article "What Did the Russia Art Periodicals of 1807–1897 Represent?" ("Chto predstaviali iz sebia russkie khudozhestvennye zhurnaly 1807–1897?") on the right. Copied from *Gospel* (*Evangeliie*), 16th century, from *Stauropegon Institute in L'viv*.

COURTESY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS AT URBANA-CHAMPAIGN LIBRARY.

and the collection of ornaments in the form of replicas, an interest in ancient ornamentation started to penetrate the graphic arts and, by the end of the nineteenth century, it became one of the main decorative source books.

Art and Art Industry proclaimed and visually expressed a message of national revival³⁰ in the graphic and decorative arts, a movement that was supported by

30 The terms "national style", "Russian style", "neo-Russian style", and "pseudo-Russian" (the latter appears mostly in Soviet and post-Soviet publications) are usually used to describe the specific styles of the visual arts in late nineteenth-century Russia, which aim to express national identity. These terms usually refer to the tendency of nineteenth-century art to reflect or re-interpret traditional forms of authentic ethnic decoration that was common in pre-Petrine Russia or speak of the late-nineteenth-century artistic reinterpretation of Russian folk arts and crafts. For more on the terminology see Karen Kettering, "Decoration and Disconnection: The *Russkii stil'* and Russian Decorative Arts at Nineteenth-Century American World's Fair," *Russian Art and the West. A Century of*

the foremost artists and art critics of the day. The *World of Art* also followed the notion of the national revival, but their visual interpretation of the theme differed significantly from copied from the ancient manuscripts designs that saturated *Art and Art Industry* and offered a completely new, modernized vision of the “Russian style”, which reverberated in a unison with the national revival moods of the turn-of-the-century European arts and design. The next section briefly explains the national revival and its socio-historical grounds in the Russian arts and culture in the late nineteenth century, which is also important for understanding the first issue of the *World of Art* and its visual message.

Abramtsevo and Talashkino, the Arts and Crafts Movement

A mood of national revival had reigned in the Russian arts since 1834, when Nicholas I (r.1825–1855) announced Official Nationality, which declared that “Autocracy, Orthodoxy and Nationality” were the embodiments of Russia’s uniqueness. It resulted in the employment of visual references to pre-Petrine ornamentality in architecture, dress, and painting, and became essential for the development of design. Ceramics, enamelling, and filigree were revived as old crafts and became fashionable in noble houses. Nicholas’s successors to the throne continued the politics of national revival with an emphasis on national identity. It was not only the court and official power that supported the national idea’s visual embodiments. On the cultural scene of the 1830s – 1850s, the Slavophiles³¹ became influential in the development of “cultural nationalism” and its visual expressions.³² The Slavophiles elevated pre-Petrine Medieval Russia and praised Russia’s allegedly unique communal lifestyle (*obshchina*). Arguing against Westernization, they expressed interest in folk customs, and collected and published folklore.³³ Being engaged with the Slavophile ideas, the Wanderers employed folklore, national history and representations of the

Dialogue in Painting, Architecture, and the Decorative Arts, ed. Rosalind P. Blakesley and Susan E. Reid (Chicago: The Northern Illinois University Press, 2007) 61–85; also see the details of terms usage in Evgenia Kirichenko and Mikhail Anikst, *Russian Design and the Fine Arts 1750–1917* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, Inc. Publishers, 1991); see also use of the term “the Style Russe” and visual examples in Chernevich, 15–37.

- 31 The Slavophile movement was formed in the 1840s by Aleksei Khomiakov, 1804–1860; Konstantin Kireevskii, 1806–1856; the Aksakov brothers, Konstantin, 1817–1860 and Ivan, 1823–1886; Iurii Samarin, 1819–1876 and others. The Slavophiles based their thoughts on the Orthodox Church theology and the idea of Russia’s uniqueness. Their philosophy was opposed to the Westerners, who thought that Russia should follow European development.
- 32 On Slavophile thought, see Susanna Rabow-Edling, *Slavophile Thought and the Politics of Cultural Nationalism* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2006).
- 33 See Linda Ivanits’s article “Folklore in the Debates of the Westernizers and Slavophiles,” *Folklorica: Journal of the Slavic and East European Folklore Association* XVI (2011): 87–115.

peasantry, the bearers of the idea of the “communal” nature (*sobornost'*) of the Russians, visible in Wanderers' artwork of the 1870s–1890s.³⁴

During the 1870s the Wanderers became frequent guests at Abramtsevo, Savva Mamontov's estate. Called “Moscow's Lorenzo Medici”,³⁵ the descendant of the wealthy merchant dynasty and a railway magnate, Mamontov purchased the Abramtsevo estate³⁶ in 1870. In 1878, the future benefactor of the *World of Art* transformed Abramtsevo into a summer residence for artists. Thus, Abramtsevo became the site of Mamontov's most celebrated venture, a famous art circle built on a common interest in folklore, folk arts and crafts. Abramtsevo had become a part of Russian cultural history in 1843, when it was bought by Sergei Aksakov (1791–1859), the writer and the father of the future Slavophiles Konstantin (1817–1860) and Ivan Aksakov (1823–1886). From 1843 till 1859, Abramtsevo was closely connected to the Slavophile movement and the contemporary development of Russian literature; the foremost writers of the time, Nikolai Gogol' (1809–1852), Ivan Turgenev (1818–1883) and others, often visited the estate.³⁷

In the 1870s–1890s, Abramtsevo's artist colony (or “Mamontov's Circle”) united three generations of prominent Russian artists.³⁸ The estate became a

34 Some examples include Vasilii Maksimov's *Grandmother's Folktales* (*Babushkiny skazki*, 1867), Vasilii Perov's *The Sorcerer's Arrival to the Peasant Wedding* (*Prihod kolduna na krestianskuiu svad'bu*, 1875), Il'ia Repin's *Sadko*, 1876), Vasilii Surikov's *The Morning of Execution the Rebellious Streltsy* (*Utro streletskoi kazni*), 1881. For the Wanderers' main art themes consult Chapter IV in Valkenier, *Russian Realist Art* 76–97.

35 Qtd. in E.V. Paston, “Formirovanie khudozhestvennogo kruzhka,” Grigorii Sternin et al., *Abramtsevo* (Leningrad: Khudozhnik RSFSR, 1988) 45.

36 The Abramtsevo estate is situated in the north-eastern Moscow region, 60 km from Moscow's current borders.

37 Grigorii Sternin, “Abramtsevo – ‘tip zhizni’ i tip iskusstva,” Grigorii Sternin et al., *Abramtsevo* (Leningrad: Khudozhnik RSFSR, 1988) 8; See also the section “National Art and Folk Art” in Chapter IV in Alison Hilton, *Russian Folk Art* (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1995) 215–226.

38 The first generation affiliated with the Wanderers movement included Vasilii Polenov (1844–1927), Il'ia Repin (1844–1930), Mark Antokol'skii (1843–1902), the Vasnetsov brothers (Viktor [1848–1926] and Apollinari [1856–1933]) and Vasilii Surikov (1858–1916). The second generation of artists was represented by Mikhail Nesterov (1862–1933), Isaak Levitan (1860–1900), Paolo Trubetskoi (1866–1938), Mikhail Vrubel' (1856–1910), Aleksandr Golovin (1863–1930), Valentin Serov (1865–1911), Elena Polenova (1858–1898), Mariia Iakunchikova (1870–1902) and Konstantin Korovin (1861–1939). The youngest participants of “Mamontov's Circle” were the future Symbolists Viktor Borisov-Musatov (1870–1905), Pavel Kuznetsov (1878–1968), Nikolai Sapunov (1880–1912), Sergei Sudeikin (1882–1946), Nikolai Ulianov (1875–1949) and Kuz'ma Petrov-Vodkin (1878–1939). See Olga Haldey, *Mamontov's Private Opera. The Search for Modernism in Russian Theatre* (Bloomington &

marker of development of a new stage of evolution in Russian arts, which represented a revival of vernacular art and the stylization of folk art. This was in defiance of the officially prescribed canons that were expressed by the architecture and interior design of church and institutional buildings. Abramtsevo involved the contemporary artistic avant-garde, which searched for new sources of inspiration and expressed a modern desire for the search for beauty. It also signified the beginning of the Russian Arts and Crafts movement, which was started with the building of a workshop and a peasant hospital designed by the architect Viktor Hartman (1834–1873) and a bathhouse designed by Ivan Ropot (Ivan Petrov, 1845–1908).³⁹ These buildings were designed in a “folk” style with specific woodcarving décor adopted from local vernacular architecture: the estate was located in an area famous for its woodcarving and Il’ia Repin (1844–1930), Viktor Vasnetsov (1848–1926) and Vasilii Polenov (1844–1927) collected examples of peasant designs in the villages around Abramtsevo.⁴⁰ Mamontov’s wife, Elizaveta Mamontova (1847–1908), and Elena Polenova (1858–1898) organized handicraft (*kustarnyi*) workshops for the peasants to produce embroidery, ceramics, and carved wooden furniture with local motifs, the customers for which were, at first, the artists themselves and their friends; later, these items were sold in Moscow.⁴¹

The peasant arts and crafts inspired many members of Mamontov’s circle, who employed folkloric motifs in their artwork.⁴² This new sympathy for the

Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2010) 71–72. More about Abramtsevo see: O.I. Arzumanova et al., *Muzei-zapovednik “Abramtsevo”* (Moskva: Izobrazitel’noe iskusstvo, 1989); Grigorii Sternin, ed., et al., *Abramtsevo* (Leningrad: Khudozhnik RSFSR, 1988); Rosalind Gray, “Questions of Identity at Abramtsevo,” *Artistic Brotherhoods in the Nineteenth Century*, ed. Laura Morowitz and William Vaughan (Burlington: Ashgate, 2000) 105–121; the chapter “Abramtsevo: ot ‘usad’by’ k ‘dache,’” in Grigorii Sternin, *Russkaia khudozhestvennaia kul’tura vtoroi poloviny XIX – nachala XX veka* (Moskva: Sovetskii khudozhnik, 1984) 184–208; Kirichenko 141–170.

39 See the section “Artistic Renewal” in Hilton 228.

40 See Chapter 1 in Wendy Salmond, *Arts and Crafts in Late Imperial Russia* (Cambridge: University of Cambridge, 1996).

41 Salmond, *Arts and Crafts* 23–39.

42 The most famous initiative of Abramtsevo was the erection of the Church of the Savior in 1881–82. The architectural design was made by Polenov and Viktor Vasnetsov, who based the plans on designs of the small local ancient churches from Olonets and Novgorod areas. It was a group project: Polenov designed the iconostasis, painted icons and created ornaments; Repin and Mamontova painted icons; Antokol’skii, assisted by Mamontov himself, carved sculptures; and Mamontova, Polenova and Iakunchikova embroidered ceremonial garments (Hilton 228).

peasantry was a result of the emancipation of serfs in 1861.⁴³ The artists' motivation was a combination of philanthropic, socio-economic, aesthetic and nationalist ideas that formed the Russian revival of folk arts and crafts.

Folklore and vernacular art became an inspiration not only for architecture and the decorative arts. Another important initiative of Mamontov's was the establishment of a private opera in 1885 that functioned until 1904. He staged both European operas and those based on Russian folklore. Mamontov commissioned the artists to participate in theatrical productions.⁴⁴ The first production staged in 1885–86 at Abramtsevo was Aleksandr Ostrovskii's (1823–1886) play in verse *The Snow Maiden* (*Snegurochka*), based on a Russian folk tale. The theatre set for the opera was designed by Vasnetsov, who recreated the peasants' dress according to models found by Polenova in the nearby villages, and created stage scenery that resembled ancient Russian log houses decorated with folkloric motifs.⁴⁵

Princess Mariia Tenisheva, another future patron of the *World of Art*, was also deeply involved in the folk art revival. Her most celebrated act of patronage resulted in the foundation of the Talashkino⁴⁶ arts and crafts workshops and artist colony. Artists such as Benois, Repin, Sergei Maliutin (1859–1937), Polenov, Mikhail Vrubel' (1856–1910), Viktor Vasnetsov, Konstantin Korovin (1861–1939) and others visited Tenishev's estate. Maliutin, a peasant by birth, became the artistic director of the Talashkino workshops.⁴⁷ The complex of art and crafts workshops with embroidery, woodcarving and ceramic studios, closely modeled on Abramtsevo, lasted from about 1898 to 1905. To a certain extent, in 1899, Talashkino took the place of Abramtsevo after Mamontov's bankruptcy; however, Tenisheva intended to surpass Mamontov's endeavours. In 1898 she founded the Museum of Russian Antiquities and Folk Art in Talashkino to exhibit the artifacts collected throughout the Russian provinces; in 1905, a folk art museum was also established in Smolensk and a store, the Source (*Rodnik*), was opened in Moscow. Such magazines as the English *The*

43 Wendy Salmond, "A Matter of Give and Take: Peasant Crafts and Their Revival in Late Imperial Russia," *Design Issues* 13.1 (1997): 6.

44 See in detail in Haldey.

45 Hilton 230.

46 The village Talashkino is situated in the south of the Smolensk region, 18 km from Smolensk.

47 About Talashkino see M.K. Tenisheva, *Vpechatleniia moei zhizni* (Leningrad: Iskusstvo, 1991); Chapter 4 in Salmond, *Arts and Crafts*; see also the chapter "Peterburg. Parizh. Talashkino" in Larisa Zhuravleva, *Kniaginia Mariia Tenisheva* (Smolensk: Poligramma, 1994); Kirichenko 170–178.

Craftsman and *Studio*, and French *Art et décoration* published articles about Tenisheva's flourishing enterprise.⁴⁸ Wendy Salmond asserts:

Dominated by a handful of clearly defined artistic personalities, Talashkino was not so much a model farm, where ancient traditions were patiently reseeded in the younger peasant generation, as a hothouse where enthusiastic artists came from the city to try their hand at inventing a national style for the modern age, based not on the *letter* of folk traditions (recycling recognizable motifs) but on its *spirit* – usually expressed in slightly hyperbolic forms, in a mannered crudeness of design, and in the invention of archaizing ornament.⁴⁹

Abramtsevo and Talashkino, kustar workshops, handicraft exhibits and sales, theatrical performances of the plays and operas that employed the theme of national revival and re-invented mythology all contributed to the invention of a new tradition. This tradition, with its “fairy-tale” visual identity, referred specifically to Russian antiquity via original designs, ornaments and folklore and expressed a romanized interpretation of “folk” crafts as created by the Russian cultural elite and not by peasants themselves. Katia Dianina calls it a “souvenir identity” and explains that,

part of the national revival that was taking place all over Europe, Russian antiquity was reinvented during the nineteenth century to serve the distinctly modern needs of nation-building via art. What distinguished the Russian scenario was that, in negotiating tradition and modernity, Russia was not only looking over its shoulder to the pre-Petrine period, but it was also casting a sideward glance toward the mirror of Western opinion.⁵⁰

Indeed this tendency was reflected in the graphic arts of the turn of the century, which also responded to the newly re-invented “national style”, with “Primitivism” as one of its main characteristics. Inspired by Abramtsevo and Talashkino artistic initiatives, the new generation of turn-of-the-century Russian artists went away from copying medieval and ancient designs toward artistic interpretations of indigenous décor and vernacular arts and used it as a starting point to create unique examples of modern graphic art. The *World of Art* graphic designers Viktor

48 Salmond, “A Matter of Give and Take” 11.

49 Salmond, “A Matter of Give and Take” 13.

50 Katia Dianina, *When Art Makes News. Writing Culture and Identity in Imperial Russia* (DeKalb: The Northern Illinois University Press, 2013) 218–219.

Vasnetsov, Ivan Bilibin (1876–1942), Polenova, Mariia Iakunchikova (1870–1902), Korovin and others, the followers of the Russian Arts and Crafts movement, created their own visual versions of the “national style” as a regional variation of Art Nouveau or the Modern Style – *stil’ modern* – in Russia.⁵¹

The Modern Style

The Art Nouveau visual language was imported to Russia by Sergei Diaghilev with his exhibits of contemporary European art in the 1890s (discussion follows). The first visual expression of the Modern Style in graphic arts was achieved in the *World of Art* and continued in *The Golden Fleece* and *Apollo*. Being a part of International Art Nouveau, the Modern Style represented its local Russian version with its distinctive features, but shared similar characteristics with Western European variations of the style.⁵²

The Russian term, “*stil’ modern*”, was derived from the French word “moderne” and referred to modern, new art, free from the narrativity and Realism of the Wanderers. The meaning of this new art sounded in concordance with European Art Nouveau, where “the concept of the ‘new’ did not simply imply novelty or relative change, but the transformation of culture through a process of evolutionary development”.⁵³

In Russia, the earliest examples of the Modern Style emerged as the stylistic interpretations of vernacular architecture and folk crafts in the aforementioned artists’ colonies of Abramtsevo and Talashkino. As will be shown, the inaugural issues of the *World of Art* reproduced the arts and crafts from Abramtsevo and Talashkino and featured graphic designs inspired by the Russian Arts and Crafts movement. Similar tendencies were apparent throughout the European arts and crafts of the 1890s.⁵⁴ Another feature that signified the early Russian Modern Style was eclecticism and the creative re-interpretation of the historical styles. Paul Greenhalgh comments on eclecticism in works of Art Nouveau artists and designers, articulating that

51 Alla Rosenfeld, “The Search for National Identity in Turn-of-the-Century Russian Graphic Design,” *Defining Russian Graphic Arts. From Diaghilev to Stalin*, ed. Alla Rosenfeld (New Brunswick, New Jersey and London: Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey, 1999) 21.

52 See details in Elena Borisova and Grigorii Sternin, *Russkii modern* (Moskva: Sovetskii khudozhnik, 1990).

53 Paul Greenhalgh, “The Style and the Age,” *Art Nouveau, 1890–1914*, ed. Paul Greenhalgh (London: Harry N. Abrams, Inc., Publishers and V&A Publications, 2000) 18.

54 See details in Paul Greenhalgh, “Alternative Histories,” *Art Nouveau, 1890–1914*, ed. Paul Greenhalgh (London: Harry N. Abrams, Inc., Publishers and V&A Publications, 2000) 37–53.

their use of history was complex: its eclecticism was born not of a desire to exercise antiquarian skills or pay homage to tradition. Rather, its practitioners were attempting to reformulate the idea of style to enable them to deal with issues in the present and the anticipated future. <...>It was a desire to provide alternatives, to move on, that characterized the whole and held its varied groups and individuals in proximity.⁵⁵

Russian “alternative histories” focused on Rococo and Baroque, Classicism and the Empire Style re-invention, and, to a lesser extent, on the Gothic revival. A new and “alternative world of art” also found inspirations in the Islamic world and East Asia. All three journals discussed in this volume experimented with graphic design orienting towards a re-interpretation of historical and oriental styles, but infusing them with totally new meanings.

European Art Nouveau was closely associated with the Symbolist movement. The tension between the physical and spiritual was always key for early Modernists. In 1965, art historian Mourice Rheims concluded that “Art Nouveau arose out of Symbolism and its sources are as diverse and bewildering as those of the parent stream.”⁵⁶ In Russia, however, the connection between Symbolism and Art Nouveau was more complex. The beginning of the Modern Style, even though it borrowed its theoretical grounds from the European aesthetics of the day, was rather a rational exploration of the new themes without the deep inclination into the spiritual. Albeit the *World of Art* published the religious-philosophical essays and poetry written by the Symbolist writers and its artists regularly attended the Religious-Philosophical Meetings (*Religiozno-filosofskie sobraniia*, 1901–1903), at this stage, the Modern Style was less influenced by religious spiritualism of the Symbolists writers and the so-called God-Seekers (*Bogoiskateli*). The artists’ interest in the religious questions of being was rarely reflected in their graphic arts.⁵⁷ Instead, Russian artistic Symbolism, which did not develop its own theoretical base, grew out of the Modern Style representing its new stream.

The Modern Style in the graphic arts in Russia began in the late 1890s with the publication of the *World of Art*, developed into its Symbolist version in *The*

55 Greenhalgh, “Alternative Histories” 37.

56 Qtd. in Ghislaine Wood and Paul Greenhalgh, “Symbols of the Sacred and Profane,” *Art Nouveau, 1890–1914*, ed. Paul Greenhalgh (London: Harry N. Abrams, Inc., Publishers and V&A Publications, 2000) 73.

57 See details about the World of Art artists’ participation in the meetings at the Religious-Philosophical Society (*Religiozno-filosofskoe obshchestvo*) in Aleksandr [Aleksandre] Benua [Benois], *Moi vospominaniia*, vol. 2 (Moskva: Nauka, 1980) 290–299.

Golden Fleece and reached its acme via an announcement of the classical revival in *Apollon*. It gradually faded with the end of the last major art periodical of late Imperial Russia in 1917.

The “Circle” of Art-Lovers and the Emergence of the World of Art

The first issues of the *World of Art* were published in late October through early November 1898 (nos. 1–2 and 3–4, 1899) – a result of collaboration of several like-minded people, who, in their adolescent years, formed a circle of art-lovers (so-called “*kruzhok*”) and matured in their passion for art together. This hobby group of young St Petersburg gymnasium students that lasted from the late 1880s to the early 1890s, was organized by Alexandre Benois, the son of the prominent St Petersburg architect Nicholas Benois (1813–1898). They called their circle the “society for self-education” and presented lectures on historical aspects of art, music, theatre and literature. The members of the “society” were classmates from the private gymnasium of Karl May: Benois, Dmitrii Filosofov, Walter Nouvel (1871–1946), Konstantin Somov, Grigorii Kalin and Nikolai Skalon formed the core in its early years.⁵⁸ Lev Rozenberg (known under the pseudonym Léon Bakst, 1866–1924), Eugene Lanceray (1875–1946), Alfred Nourok (1860–1919) and Diaghilev joined the circle a few years later.⁵⁹ All of them, except Skalon and Kalin, would become leading members of the editorial board of the *World of Art*.

In his memoir, *The Appearance of the World of Art* (*Vozniknovenie Mira Iskusstva*), published in 1928, Benois wrote that discussions about publishing an art journal had begun around 1893, five years before its actual launch.⁶⁰ He recalled that his cousin Eugene Kavos was an amateur photographer and heliogravure maker who set up a shop with the necessary equipment in his house. He printed (in a very modest number of copies) albums with reproductions of Repin’s paintings, Artur Ober’s (1843–1917) sculptures, and installation shots of the art exposition in the Kushelev Art Gallery at the Academy of Arts.⁶¹ Kavos’s endeavours inspired Benois and his friends to ask specific questions about printing technologies and the possibility of publishing an art periodical. The

58 No further biographical information is available about Grigorii Kalin and Nikolai Skalon.

59 Aleksandr Benua, *Vozniknovenie “Mira Iskusstva”* (Moskva: Iskustvo, 1998) 8–9.

60 Benua, *Vozniknovenie* 13.

61 Kushelev Art Gallery was the permanent public art exhibit in St Petersburg. The collection for the gallery was donated by Prince N.A. Kushelev-Bezborodko and contained 466 paintings and 29 sculptures. In 1918, Benois, as a Custodian of the Hermitage Art Gallery assisted to joining the collection to the Hermitage gathering. See Veronika Bogdan, “Muzei Akademii khudozhestv,” *Nashe nasledie* 65 (2003) 21 March, 2011 <<http://www.nasledie-rus.ru/podshivka/6508.php>>.

idea was not realized then, but, according to Benois, talk about the art journal became a regular feature at all the circle's meetings.⁶²

Benois claimed that even though he was the main theoretician of the circle, he did not have enough "vanity" (*tshcheslavie*) or perseverance (*vyderzhka*) to move the circle to the next level and found a periodical. Nor did other members seem able to lead. Benois (and perhaps others) never considered Diaghilev to be a serious candidate for leadership. Diaghilev had joined the circle in 1890 after graduation from the Perm gymnasium. Initially the members of the circle treated the provincial Diaghilev disparagingly and "tolerated him as Filosofov's cousin only".⁶³ According to Benois, Diaghilev irritated the refined circle members with his provincialism and grandstanding and seemed absolutely indifferent towards the visual arts and literature. At the same time, Benois would note that Diaghilev possessed a "more primitive 'Russian' soul, which could absorb new impressions and move Diaghilev's 'primordial' energy".⁶⁴

In 1895, according to Benois, Diaghilev had suddenly changed his attitude towards the visual arts; he started collecting artworks and rarities and traveled abroad. While in Europe, he "visited 24 museums and 14 artists' ateliers" and purchased artworks by Adolf Menzel, Pierre Puvis de Chavannes, Max Liebermann and other prominent artists of the day. After his return in 1896, Diaghilev published his first article "The Watercolour Exhibit" ("Akvel'naia vystavka")⁶⁵ under the name Amateur (*Liubitel'*).⁶⁶ This article was devoted to the 16th exhibit of the Society of Russian Watercolourists (*Obshchestvo russkikh akvarelistov*).⁶⁷ After that first successful experience as an art-journalist, he continued publishing articles on contemporary art. In May 1898, in Britain, Diaghilev paid a visit to Oscar Wilde and, according to Diaghilev's biographer Sjeng Scheijen, charmed the Irish writer.⁶⁸ By the time the periodical was

62 Benua, *Vozniknovenie* 13–14.

63 Benua, *Vozniknovenie* 14.

64 Benua, *Vozniknovenie* 15.

65 Sergei Diaghilev [Diaghilev], "Akvel'naia vystavka," *Novosti i birzhevaia gazeta* 8 (Jan 8, 1896). This newspaper printed several of Diaghilev's publications until 1898, when the *World of Art* was launched, after which Diaghilev published most of his articles there.

66 Diaghilev submitted all his first articles only after Benois read them, since he considered Benois his mentor (Benua, *Vozniknovenie* 18).

67 The Society was organized in 1880 and functioned until 1917. One of its founders was Albert Benois, Alexander Benois's older brother. Aleksandr Benua, *Moi vospominaniia*, vol. 1 (Moskva: Nauka, 1980) 88–98; vol. 2, 638; D. Ia. Severiukhin and O.L. Leikind, *Zolotoi vek khudozhestvennykh ob'edinenii v Rossii i SSSR (1820–1932)* (Peterburg: Izdatel'stvo Chernysheva, 1992) 186–188.

68 Sjeng Scheijen, *Diaghilev. A Life* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010) 83.

launched and thanks to the exhibits he organized, Diaghilev had learned how to use his charismatic persona and impeccable dandyism to move the art world of late Imperial Russia and market it in Europe.

In 1896, the main theoretician of the circle, Benois, left Russia and settled with his family in Paris; Somov and Lanceray also relocated to France. Diaghilev visited the circle, which now resided in Paris.⁶⁹ During Benois's absence, in 1897–98, Diaghilev organized and curated his first art exhibit, the Exhibit of English and German Water-Colourists (*Vystavka angliiskikh i nemetskikh akvarelistov*, 1897).⁷⁰ Diaghilev's intention was to introduce contemporary European art to the public, who still were under the spell of the Wanderers and their illustrative and descriptive Realist art. The general public and the Wanderers' theorists such as Stasov were outraged. In their eyes, modern European art exemplified "decadence" and the deterioration of taste. Nevertheless, Diaghilev quite aggressively and steadily continued to stir the public with new exhibits, which were important in terms of altering the visual preferences of the Russian public still not ready for that. His intentions were educational at core and to a certain degree corresponded to the "art-lovers' circle" vision to overcome stagnation in the Russian arts and bring it to the next level, but on a bigger scale. For instance, Diaghilev shared the circle's views with the general public that, in just few years resulted in the acceptance of modern European art, an outburst of collecting of Modernist artists and rapid development of Russian art, design and visual culture.

To understand the scale and significance of Diaghilev's initiatives, it is important to outline Diaghilev's exhibits and provide the names of the artists that he showed. His next show, the Exhibit of Scandinavian Artists (*Vystavka skandinavskikh khudozhnikov*, 1897), featured works by the Norwegian and Swedish artists including Hans Heyerdahl, Christian Krohg, Gerhard Munthe, Fritz Thaulow, Edvard Munch, Prins Eugen, Carl Larsson, Bruno Liljefors, Anders Zorn and others. This exhibit was an impressive event; its catalogue listed 289 works.⁷¹ However, it was not very successful in terms of moneymaking.⁷² This fact did not discourage Diaghilev, who continued to show contemporary European art in Russia.

According to Benois, the very first of Diaghilev's exhibits triggered thoughts about beginning an art society, which was eventually organized by Diaghilev in 1897.⁷³ As Benois reported, the Exhibit of Russian and Finnish Artists (*Vystavka*

69 Benua, *Vozniknovenie* 19–20.

70 The exhibit took place in St Petersburg at Baron Stieglitz's museum.

71 Dariusz Konstantynow, "Light from the North. The Reception of Scandinavian Art in the Circle of Russian Modernists," *Totenmesse: Modernism in the Culture of Northern and Central Europe* (Warsaw: Institute of Art, Polish Academy of Sciences, 1996): 170.

72 Diaghilev's venture ended in a financial loss of 285 roubles, which Diaghilev paid from his own pocket. Scheijen 85.

73 Benua, *Vozniknovenie* 23–24.

russskikh i finliandskikh khudozhnikov, 1898) in St Petersburg was the first public appearance of the new group of artists, which still did not have a name.⁷⁴ This seminal exhibit not only featured artworks by the members of the circle, but united the best representatives of the young generation of Russian artists, such as Vrubel', Valentin Serov (1865–1911), Isaak Levitan (1860–1900), Mikhail Nesterov (1862–1942), Korovin, Appolinarii Vasnetsov (1856–1933), Andrei Riabushkin (1861–1904), Maliutin, Polenova and such prominent Finnish artists as Akseli Gallén-Kallela, Albert Edelfelt, Ville Vallgren, Väinö Blomstedt, Pekka Halonen, Gabriel Engberg, Magnus Enckell and others. The exhibit caused a great stir.⁷⁵

These two exhibits were significant in terms of presenting contemporary Scandinavian art, which was almost unknown in Russia before 1897. Diaghilev was fascinated with Scandinavians and started collecting their art, which stimulated the collectors, who then began adding the works of Scandinavian artists to their lists. Not only did Diaghilev himself collect Scandinavian paintings and graphic art, but Tenisheva and Mamontov also would acquire oils and water-colours by Zorn, Thaulow, Munthe, Werenskiöld, Liljefors and many others in their private collections.⁷⁶ As will be shown, Scandinavian art influenced the Russian arts and graphic design, which was reflected in the first issue of the *World of Art*.

The next important international exhibit organized by Diaghilev took place during the first year of publication of the *World of Art* in 1899 and was already entitled The Exhibit of the World of Art (*Vystavka Mira Iskusstva*). It was organized at Baron Stieglitz's museum, where all the previous shows had been exhibited, but this one with even greater style. It featured an elegant interior embellished with hyacinths, greenery and soft music. The opening halls exhibited crystal jewelry and glasswork by René Lalique and Tiffany,⁷⁷ who were unheard of in Russia, alongside arts and crafts from the Abramtsevo and Talashkino artists' colonies. Diaghilev successfully negotiated with European artists during his travels to Europe, cultivating his art contacts very carefully. In this exhibit he showed artworks by Giovanni Boldini, Frank Brangwyn, Charles Conder, Max Lieberman, James Abbott McNeill Whistler, Gustave Moreau, Lucien Simon, Eugène Carrière, Jean-Louis Forain, Edgar Degas and Pierre Puvis de Chavannes.⁷⁸ Thus, Diaghilev exhibited contemporary European art in Russia; it was not, however, easily accepted and was criticized.

74 Benua, *Vozniknovenie* 29.

75 Konstantynow 172.

76 Konstantynow 171.

77 This is reported by Tenisheva in her memoirs. Tenisheva 164.

78 Beverly Kean, *French Painters, Russian Collectors. The Merchant Patrons of Modern Art in Pre-Revolutionary Russia* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1994) 40–41.

Vladimir Stasov vs. Sergei Diaghilev

These early Diaghilev exhibitions were severely criticized by the established art elite, including Stasov, and even Repin, who participated in the Exhibit of Russian and Finnish Artists and who initially supported the endeavours of the new art generation. Stasov's first statement against the group appeared in the art section of *News and Stock Market Gazette* (*Novosti i birzhevaia gazeta*)⁷⁹ in January-February 1898. In "Exhibits" ("Vystavki"), he proclaimed that all the new Russian art presented at the Exhibit of Russian and Finnish Artists was "decadent trash" and an "orgy of debauchery". Stasov, whom Diaghilev knew personally and often met at Bogdanovskoe, the Filosofov's family estate,⁸⁰ criticized Diaghilev for his choice of artwork and appealed to him to stop such "uncontrolled art shows".⁸¹ Diaghilev wrote an official response to Stasov, which he submitted to the editorial board of *News and Stock Market Gazette*, in which he explained that Russian art needed to be renewed to overcome its current stagnation.⁸² The letter was never published; Stasov's status was too high, thus nobody dared to print anything that contained an attack (even a gentle one) on him. The critic did not respond to Diaghilev's letter; therefore Diaghilev went to the national library, where Stasov worked as a head librarian, and invited him to submit articles on art history to the *World of Art*. The proposal resulted in Stasov's publication of even more offensive criticism.⁸³

In his next publication devoted to Diaghilev's shows, published in January 1899 in *News and Stock Market Gazette*, Stasov accused Russian artists of Europeanism and announced their art as "base aping of European art".⁸⁴ A month later he published another aggressive review, wherein he compared the World of Art show with *La cour des miracles* from Hugo's *Notre-Dame de Paris*.⁸⁵

79 *News and Stock Market Gazette* (*Novosti i birzhevaia gazeta*) was a newspaper published in St Petersburg in 1880–1906. It was a mouthpiece of the major Russian manufacturers and reported on recent political events and market news. It also devoted articles to contemporary art shows, theatre production and musical concerts.

80 Scheijen 90–91.

81 Vladimir Stasov, "Vystavki," *Izbrannye sochineniia v trekh tomakh* by V.V. Stasov, vol. 3 (Moskva: Iskusstvo, 1952) 221; 217; Scheijen 92–3.

82 See the full text of Diaghilev's letter "Otvét V.V. Stasovu" in I.S. Zil'bershtein and V.A. Samkov, eds. and comps., *Sergei Diaghilev i russkoe iskusstvo. Stat'i, otkrytye pis'ma, interv'iu. Perepiska. Sovremenniki o Diaghileve*, in 2 vol. 1 (Moskva: Izobrazitel'noe iskusstvo, 1982) 73–76.

83 Scheijen 92–93.

84 Vladimir Stasov, "Nishchie dukhom," *Izbrannye sochineniia v trekh tomakh* by V.V. Stasov, vol. 3 (Moskva: Iskusstvo, 1952) 232.

85 The critic wrote that if a person were to appear in the exhibit halls of the Baron Stieglitz museum, he would encounter the same things that could be seen in *La cour des miracles*: "Some kind of wild yell and howl, roaring and bellowing; you need to go through crabs,

He called all the European art shown in the exhibit a “monstrosity and car-
 rion” and nicknamed Diaghilev the “decadent village headman” (*dekadentskii
 starosta*).⁸⁶

In Russia, the epithets “decadence” and “decadent”, as used by Stasov,
 referred to degeneration and degradation of art. For Stasov, true art, such as the
 works executed by the Wanderers, expressed moral themes, while the “deca-
 dents” departed from the “true path”. Stasov (and likely other critics that repre-
 sented the older generation) associated the new art with the aestheticist
 movements coming from Europe and used the term to highlight his negative
 perception. The World of Art artists and critics, however, considered the use of
 the term a misconception that needed to be corrected. Thus, Benois envisioned
 the launch of a new art journal with an inaugural article that would become an
 announcement “of a battle against ‘decadence’ (*v programme ob’iavit’ gonenie
 i smert’ dekadentstvu*)”,⁸⁷ which for him was associated with salon art or Realism
 of the Wanderers. According to Benois, the meaning of “decadence” in Russia
 was misinterpreted, and everything, “which was good [i.e. European and con-
 temporary Russian art], was considered by critics and artists from Stasov’s
 camp ‘decadent’. Benois called this stance “just childish ignorance, no more”.⁸⁸

In *The St Petersburg Newspaper* (*Peterburgskaia gazeta*) of 1898, writing
 under the name Passe-partout (*Paspartu*), Diaghilev published “Arts and
 Crafts” (“*Iskusstva i remesla*”),⁸⁹ wherein he announced the importance of
 publishing a new art journal. He claimed that art was now in a transitional
 period, moving from the dying Wanderers’ movement to the birth of new artis-
 tic developments. He asserted that the new generation must bring new life to
 art and make it marketable in Europe, because all attempts to show Russian art
 in Europe had been unsuccessful due to its backwardness and stagnancy. The
 new journal would unite all new artists and would allow them to express
 themselves together.⁹⁰ Stasov did not ignore this pronouncement and pub-
 lished his own notorious response entitled “Poor in Spirit” (“*Nishchie
 dukhom*”),⁹¹ in *News and Stock Market Gazette*; he criticized the *World of Art*
 before its appearance for its ultimate desire to undermine old and stable artis-
 tic principles.

freaks, cripples, monsters crawling everywhere, decay and scum”. See Vladimir Stasov,
 “Podvor’e prokazhennykh,” *Izbrannye sochineniia v trekh tomakh* by V.V. Stasov, vol., 3
 (Moskva: Iskusstvo, 1952) 257.

86 Stasov, “Podvor’e prokazhennykh” 259.

87 Benua, *Vozniknovenie* 31.

88 Benua, *Vozniknovenie* 31.

89 Paspartu [Sergei Diaghilev], “Iskusstva i remesla,” *Peterburgskaia gazeta* 141 (1898, May 25).

90 See “Iskusstva i remesla” in Zil’bershtein and Samkov, vol. 1, 76.

91 Stasov, “Nishchie dukhom” 234.

Editorial Board: Sergei Diaghilev vs. Alexandre Benois and Other Participants of the World of Art

Benois and Diaghilev were two leaders who introduced Modernism to Russia and paved the way for the rapid development of the arts and visual culture. Diaghilev's charisma, his accomplishments in promoting Russian art abroad, his Russian Seasons and artistic enterprises of different kinds, however, sometimes overshadowed Benois, the founder of the World of Art, the key figure, who infused its members with the idea of Europeanization and who showed interest in publishing a periodical long before Diaghilev. Benois contributed to the development of the aesthetics of Russian Modernism significantly⁹² as well as he influenced and mentored Diaghilev himself. To better understand the *World of Art*, its certain inconsistency in realizing its aesthetic program (which is clearly visible through examination of the entire run of the journal), this section attempts to situate both leaders of the World of Art and their confrontations; this involves examining their positions as expressed in the *World of Art* during its publication and the conflicts on the editorial board.

While Diaghilev argued with Stasov and actively promoted contemporary European art in Russia, loudly promising a great future for Russian art, the melancholically inclined Benois was living in France and going through "an emotional crisis". In his memoirs, Benois would confess that only in the late summer of 1898, was he able to overcome his depression and start to write articles for the forthcoming periodical. His first article about Pieter Breughel was, nevertheless, rejected by the editorial board of the *World of Art*.⁹³ Diaghilev may have wanted to appeal to the reader with something less "historical" and more contemporary.

Benois's "historicism" and *passéisme* was always opposed to Diaghilev's inclination for the contemporary, fresh and avant-garde. Benois's artistic "contemporaneity" was always "historically" predisposed throughout Benois's art works; in understanding originality, Diaghilev was more sensitive towards the newest trends than his mentor, Benois. Both were the leaders of the World of Art, but their leadership was different in terms of their functions. If Benois was the theoretician of the circle, Diaghilev's energy was directed toward the practical realization of ideas – organizing exhibits, the launch of the journal, and the future ballets, Russian Seasons.

Reading Benois's memoirs *The Appearance of the World of Art*, the attentive reader will immediately encounter Benois's complicated attitude toward

92 Discussion regarding Benois's participation in *Apollo* follows in Chapter 4.

93 Benua, *Vozniknovenie* 37.

Diaghilev and his enterprise.⁹⁴ Indeed, it is important to note that Benois and Diaghilev had a very uneasy but longstanding friendship. This difficult relationship could be explained as a rivalry between two leaders of the World of Art (group and journal). Benois remembered the future art-director as an “artistically uneducated provincial” who unexpectedly replaced him in the role of art educator and art leader in the “society of self-education” that, under Diaghilev’s direction, grew into the society of avant-garde artists, where Benois suddenly appeared only in a secondary role. In obtaining the new “status” of art dealer and entrepreneur and art journal editor, Diaghilev developed certain personal characteristics that Benois could not easily accept. In his later semi-public “Famous letter to Diaghilev”, as Benois himself entitled it (the letter was meant to be disseminated among their friends, the members of the circle), written during his stay in France before he moved back to Russia to participate in the *World of Art*, the artist accused Diaghilev of despotism:

I do not consider myself inferior to you and I cannot accept how you approach me (this conviction is not just mine, but also Zhenia’s [Eugene Lanceray] and Kostia’s [Konstantin Somov]. However, I know that you never change your manners, because you believe in your grandeur and superiority. That is why it is no longer possible for us to be together. I am afraid of you as an art entrepreneur; I do not accept you as a friend anymore, because you bring to our relationship a note of idiosyncrasy and grandstanding, which is at minimum unpalatable.⁹⁵

94 See the correspondence between Benois and Diaghilev and Benois’s reflection on it in: Benua, *Vozniknovenie* 32–39.

95 See the full text of this letter: I.I. Vydrin, ed. and comp., “Benua – Diagilevu. Ianvar’ 1899 g. Parizh,” *Aleksandr Nikolaevich Benua i Sergei Pavlovich Diagilev. Perepiska (1893–1928)* (Sankt-Peterburg: Sad Iskusstv, 2003) 48–52; 49–50. The first clashes began even earlier. Benois had already expressed his negative perception of Diaghilev’s ambitions as early as 1896: “Serezha [Diaghilev] spent here three days in 1896, now he is rushing in Dieppe to Thaulow, then to London to invite the Scottish and English artists to his exhibit.... He made an unpleasant impression, even though at first I was very happy to see him. His hellish complacency, his impertinently splendid appearance, his dandyish pose *en grand seigneur russe parlant “admirablement” bien le français*, his insulting patronage, which is so far from sincere art patronage, ...“art” prostitution with the aim of playing a magnificent role – all these made me so angry, that we almost swore at each other...” (See “Alexandre Benois’s letter to Konstantin Somov. Paris, December 1896,” *Pis’ma A.N. Benua k K. Somovu (1888–1920)* RGALI [The Russian State Archive of Literature and Art], f. 869, op. 1, ed. kh. 12). Nevertheless, after several months, Benois asserted in a letter to Walter Nouvel: “Humankind is moved by people like Serezha [Diaghilev]. Honour and respect to them”. (See *Pis’ma A.N. Benua k V.F. Nuveliu [1895–1908]*. RGALI, f. 781, op. 1, ed.kh. 3).

Both Diaghilev and Benois had strong personalities and temperaments that led to constant clashes. Russian scholar Aleksandr Iakimovich contrasted Benois with Diaghilev and remarked upon their opposite natures, which created a “bi-polar” structure in the *World of Art* (and the group). The researcher asserts that in this “bi-polar system”, Benois played the role of ideal Father. He was encyclopedically omniscient, strict, well-mannered, and rational, an admirer of order, duty, responsibility and discipline; he expected and required the same from his colleagues. Everything that seemed shapeless, undigested, preposterous, odd, absurd, and absolutely intuitive creatively, anything not measured by the standards of Civilization, Culture and Discipline caused him to protest sharply.⁹⁶ Diaghilev was Benois’s opposite, whom Iakimovich calls a Russian “confederate” of Henri Bergson, the originator of the concept *l’elan vital* (vital strength), and André Gide, whose protagonist from *The Immoralist* (1902) he sees as very similar to Diaghilev.⁹⁷ The art critic suggests that it would be a mistake to imagine Diaghilev as a “rational art-manager” of well-run cultural programs. Rather, his foremost role was in foreseeing the direction of art processes and the ability to catalyze them.⁹⁸

Both Benois and Diaghilev influenced each other, and precisely this duo brought Russian artistic culture to the new level. Like many of the other participants in the journal, Benois and Diaghilev were still quite young (Benois was 28, Diaghilev was only 26, while Stasov was 75) at the time of the periodical’s launch and were not yet recognized as influential figures among the Russian cultural elite. Nevertheless, in the following decades, Diaghilev and Benois would play major roles in developing the Russian arts and would influence their development immeasurably.

Thus, Benois and Diaghilev were the core leaders of the World of Art, both the group and the periodical; they fulfilled two different functions. Benois was the main theoretician and the founder of the “society of self-education”, while Diaghilev became the official organizer of the group and the editor-in-chief of the new art journal. In 1904, the last year of the editorial board’s work (the last issues, dated 1904, came out in 1905), Benois became the co-editor-in-chief, and several issues were published under his direction.

Other members of the circle of “self-education” constituted the editorial board of the periodical. The core of the board – Bakst, Somov, Lanceray, Filosofov, Nouvel and Nourok – came out of the “society”. The other participants of the

96 Aleksandr Iakimovich, “Benua i Diaghilev: Apollon i Dionis ‘Mira Iskusstva,’” *Pinakoteka* 6–7 (1998): 94.

97 Iakimovich 95.

98 Iakimovich 96.

journal were artists and art critics of the older generation, who joined the group and were not associated with the “circle of self-education”, such as Serov, Korovin, Polenova, Iakunchikova, Nataliia Davydova, Anna Ostroumova-Lebedeva (1871–1955), and Stepan Iaremich (1869–1939). The writers who participated in the periodical and represented the avant-garde literature of the day were the Symbolists Merezhkovskii, Gippius, Rozanov, Petr Pertsov (1869–1947), Fedor Sologub (1863–1927), Nikolai Minskii (1855–1937), and Vladimir Solov’ev (1853–1900). Later the artist Mstislav Dobuzhinskii (1875–1957), art critic Igor Grabar’, philosophers Shestov and Ivan Romanov-Rtzy (1861–1913), and the Symbolist poets of the so-called younger generation Andrei Belyi (1880–1934), Valerii Briusov (1873–1924), Konstantin Bal’mont (1867–1942) and others joined the journal.

All these people united together to articulate their views on contemporary art and aesthetics; by publishing the art periodical they expressed a “group identity”. Anonymity, use of pseudonyms, or signing articles with just initials were distinct characteristics of the journal. Behind the anonymity, a collective editorial view was expressed.

The Patrons of the World of Art and the Journal's Closure

During the first year of publication, the patrons of the *World of Art* were the aforementioned founders of the Russian Arts and Crafts movement, Mamontov and Tenisheva. Both Mamontov and Tenisheva were interested in the visual arts. Tenisheva experimented with the decorative arts,⁹⁹ and, according to Benois, “was thirsty for noble glory”.¹⁰⁰ Ostroumova-Lebedeva noted that Tenisheva was “a wealthy woman who has decided to patronize the arts and though apparently she doesn’t understand much about them, has the good sense to consult people who do”.¹⁰¹ Tenisheva had a complicated relationship with the editorial board and Benois, who considered himself her mentor,¹⁰² which eventually affected the publication in many ways.

Mamontov and Tenisheva’s patronage of the *World of Art* ended after they had initially donated 12,500 rubles each.¹⁰³ In 1899, Mamontov went bankrupt and Tenisheva, who was never interested the popularization of European art and the Europeanization of Russian art to which the journal was committed,

99 Larisa Zhuravleva 239–243.

100 Benua, *Vozniknovenie* 31.

101 Qtd. in Salmond, *Arts and Crafts* 115.

102 About the rupture of relationship between Benois and Tenisheva see Chapter 29 in Benua, *Moi vospominaniia*, vol. 2 232–239.

103 Tenisheva 162.

refused to subsidize the periodical. From the very beginning she envisioned the *World of Art* as a propagator of the national revival, without the exposition of Western art and promotion of the Empire Style and European themes.¹⁰⁴ Benois claimed that she was influenced by Adrian Prakhov (1846–1916),¹⁰⁵ the art historian and archaeologist firmly associated with the Wanderers. After the first year of publication, she categorically refused to fund the periodical without changes to its ideology of cosmopolitanism and Europeanism.¹⁰⁶

Thus, the journal appeared to be at an ideological crossroads and faced closure a year after its launch. The situation, however, was resolved by Serov,¹⁰⁷ who was commissioned to paint a portrait of Nicholas II. When Serov told the tsar about the financial catastrophe at the *World of Art*, Nicholas II decided to support the periodical out of his own pocket. A subsidy of 10,000 roubles did not cover all expenses, but it did allow the publication to continue. Afterwards, inspired by the tsar's patronage, private donors such as Sergei Botkin, Il'ia Ostroukhov, the Morozov family and others donated significant sums of money that helped the journal to continue until 1904.¹⁰⁸

The journal ceased publication in 1904 nonetheless due to financial difficulties: the Russo-Japanese War (1904–1905) had begun and Nicholas II refused to further subsidize the periodical. To continue the journal, Diaghilev invited Tenisheva to become a benefactor of the journal again. Since Tenisheva wanted to return the journal to the “national style”, she agreed to finance the periodical, but stipulated that Benois had to be replaced on the editorial board by Nikolai Rerikh (1874–1947), a committed follower of the national revival. Her proposal, however, was not accepted; in spite of their turbulent relationships, Diaghilev did not betray his friend Benois and thus the *World of Art* ended.¹⁰⁹ Benois also reported that the refusal to revive the “national style” was not the

104 Tenisheva 167.

105 About Prakhov see Olenka Pevny, “In Fedor Solntsev's Footsteps: Adrian Prakhov and the Representation of Kievan Rus,” *Visualizing Russia. Fedor Solntsev and Crafting a National Past*, ed. Cynthia Hyla Whittaker (Leiden & Boston: Brill, 2010) 85–108.

106 Benua, *Vozniknovenie* 47–48.

107 Valentin Serov was a graduate of the Academy of Arts and was associated with Abramtsevo circle (1884) and was the member of the Wanderers movement (since 1894). Around 1900 Serov became close to the World of Art. About Serov see Igor Grabar, *Valentin Aleksandrovich Serov: zhizn' i tvorchestvo: 1865–1911* (Moskva: Iskusstvo, 1980); Elizabeth K. Valkenier, *Valentin Serov: Portraits of Russia's Silver Age* (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 2001).

108 Benua, *Moi vospominaniia*, vol. 2 290.

109 Larisa Zhuravleva, 148–49.

only reason for its closure; the journal's editorial board's enthusiasm had waned and the World of Art exhibits were no longer organized after 1903 (the official restoration of the World of Art group would occur only in 1910). According to Benois, Diaghilev had become bored and needed a new romantic and risky enterprise.¹¹⁰

In the 1920s, Sergei Makovskii (1877–1962), the editor of *Apollo* (*Apollon*, 1909–1917), the *World of Art*'s successor, expressed his opinion about the *World of Art* closure. Makovskii believed that, though it began as a vanguard, the World of Art movement (and periodical) degenerated into a conservative and snobbish “aestheticism”, which by the 1910s had become backward and rigid. The former “decadents” with their daring innovations were now fading against the background of the newer radical trends (such as Cubo-Futurism, Suprematism, and Rayonism [*luchizm*]). In the 1910s, the World of Art was accused of “Academicism” and narrativity, i.e. marks of an obsolete generation of artists. According to Makovskii, the demise of the *World of Art* was a result of its makers' immaturity. He claimed that they perceived their work not as an artistic professional endeavour, but as a fascinating game, “aesthetic haughtiness with a tinge of self-satisfaction, egotistical frivolity and gourmandise” (*esteticheskoe barstvo s ottenkom presyshchennosti, slavoliubivogo legkomysliia i gurmanstva*).¹¹¹ Makovskii considered that the *World of Art* collapsed primarily due to its rigid group identity that grew out of a circle of teenagers, which resulted in intolerance for the “other”, i.e. those who were not affiliated with them from its early beginnings. According to Makovskii, this “narrow exclusiveness” (*kruzhkovost'*) was the reason behind the many clashes in the journal's history and the hostility between the St Petersburg and Moscow members of the editorial board and artists of the *World of Art*. He claimed that Diaghilev, due to his ambitions, grew tired of exhibiting and publishing in Russia and went to Europe in search of “foreign glory” (*zagranichnye lavry*), leaving his projects of studying (and reproducing) eighteenth-century Russian art unfinished.¹¹²

With the benefit of historical distance, it must be said that, to a certain extent, Makovskii's criticism, is relevant. This “group elitism” bonded like-minded people together, enabling them to produce an art journal that changed the look of Russian periodical culture and became a benchmark for further art periodical production, including Makovskii's *Apollo*. Nonetheless this “group exclusiveness” contributed eventually to the closure of the *World of Art*. As will

110 Benua, *Vozniknovenie* 52–53.

111 Sergei Makovskii, *Siluety russkikh khudozhnikov* (Praga: Nasha rech', 1922) 39–40.

112 Makovskii, *Siluety* 41.

be shown, Makovskii's *Apollo* represented a different type of group identity, one that made this art journal the most long-lived among all three periodicals discussed here.

The Editorial Mission Statement

This is the final section in the part of the chapter devoted to the historico-cultural context in which the *World of Art* appeared. However, it is devoted not to the context, but to the major text of the inaugural issues of the journal and explains the theoretical foundation of the journal. To better understand the paratextual qualities of the journal, it is important to delineate its main text and its meaning.

The *World of Art's* group identity was expressed in the editorial statement published in two double issues nos. 1–2 and nos. 3–4. It was signed by Diaghilev himself and represented an article “The Complex Questions” (“Slozhnye voprosy”). Importantly, in his article Diaghilev consistently uses “we” instead of “I,” therefore the whole text appears to be a collective artistic manifesto and a representation of a group identity.

The text was divided into four parts: “Our So-called Decline” (“Nash mnimyi upadok”), “The Eternal Struggle” (“Vechnaia bor’ba”), “The Search for Beauty,” (“Poiski krasoty”) and “The Foundations for Artistic Evaluation” (“Osnovy khudozhestvennoi otsenki”).¹¹³ The first two sections were published in issue 1–2 (1899), and the last two sections in issue 3–4 (1899). Diaghilev’s program for the arts set out in this editorial statement has been discussed in a number of scholarly publications.¹¹⁴ This section will outline only the most important statements of the editorial platform.

The title and the titled sub-sections of Diaghilev’s article allude to the main idea, which implies that the situation in the Russian arts is “complex” and needs to be renewed. The article starts with an epigraph, “Those who follow others will never surpass them” (attributed to Michelangelo) and highlights the importance of initiating a new art movement that refuses to follow the Wanderers and Academicism.

The author addresses his “appeal” to the critics of modern art. The reader would probably assume that under the title “our judges,”¹¹⁵ the author implies his most adamant opponents, such as the aforementioned Stasov, the “nihilist”

113 Sergei Diaghilev, “Slozhnye voprosy.” *Mir Iskusstva* 1–2 (1899): 1–16; 3–4 (1899): 37–61.

114 See, for example, the detailed discussions of Diaghilev’s manifesto in: Kennedy, *The “Mir Iskusstva” Group* 63–84; Lapshina 47–49; Bowlit, *The Silver Age* 69–75; Scheijen 98–100.

115 Diaghilev, “Slozhnye voprosy” 2–3.

Viktor Burenin (1841–1926)¹¹⁶ and the “populist” Nikolai Mikhailovskii (1842–1904),¹¹⁷ the follower of Nikolai Chernyshevskii (1828–1889) and the editor of the journal *Russian Wealth* (*Russkoe bogatstvo*), who published severe criticisms against Diaghilev’s exhibits. Among his ideological adversaries, Diaghilev openly mentions Max Nordau, the author of the recently published *Degeneration* (1892), which he dismissed as a “vulgar and trashy little book” (*bazarnaia knizhonka*).¹¹⁸ Diaghilev interrogates “the judges” about contemporary Russian art and its past golden age, which was overthrown by the decadents (“We were called the children of decline. ...Where is this heyday, this apogee of art, from which we sweepingly decline to the abyss of decay?”)¹¹⁹ He discusses the development of art and art criticism during the nineteenth century and claims that nineteenth-century art is a mosaic of different trends and conflicts of generations and art schools.¹²⁰

Diaghilev announces the divorce of the new Russian generation of artists from Classicism and Academism. He sarcastically refers to the so-called major

116 In his memoirs Petr Pertsov describes an episode that happened in spring 1899. Burenin was publishing openly slanderous feuilletons in *The New Times* (*Novoe vremia*), which were directed against the *World of Art* and Diaghilev personally. On Easter Eve, Diaghilev and Filosofov visited Burenin’s apartment, but not for the holiday celebrations. Diaghilev explained the aim of his visit and requested Burenin to discontinue publishing his offensive pasquinades. In the end of his talk Diaghilev hit Burenin with his high silk hat right in the writer’s face. After this visit, the slanderous feuilletons never appeared again. See Petr Pertsov, *Literaturnye vospominaniia 1890–1902* (Moskva: Novoe literaturnoe obozrenie, 2002) 225.

117 See, for example, Mikhailovskii’s article about the Exhibit of Russian and Finnish Artists (January 1898) published in the periodical *The Russian Wealth* (*Russkoe bogatstvo*): Nikolai Mikhailovskii, “Chetyre khudozhestvennye vystavki,” *Lib.ru/Klassika* 14 Jan, 2009 <http://az.lib.ru/m/mihajlowskij_n_k/text_0460.shtml>.

118 Diaghilev, “Slozhnye voprosy” 52. In his book, Max Nordau announced the twilight of the nations, summoned arts back to morality, didactics and clarity, and accused contemporary art and literature of degeneracy. He claimed that “the physician, especially if he has devoted himself to the special study of nervous and mental maladies, recognizes at a glance, in the *fin-de-siècle* disposition, in the tendencies of contemporary art and poetry, in the life and conduct of the men who write mystic, symbolic and ‘decadent’ works, and the attitude taken by their admirers in the tastes and aesthetic instincts of fashionable society, the confluence of two well-defined conditions of disease, with which he is quite familiar, viz. degeneration (degeneracy) and hysteria, of which the minor stages are designated as neurasthenia”. See Max Nordau, *Degeneration* (New York: Howard Fertig, 1968) 15.

119 Diaghilev, “Slozhnye voprosy” 52.

120 For example, Diaghilev describes the trial of Whistler against Ruskin in detail (Diaghilev, “Slozhnye voprosy” 7–8).

“achievements” of Russian art of the second half of the nineteenth century: (1) the “decadence” of salon Classicism embodied in the Academic art of Bakalovich (Stefan Bakalowicz, 1857–1936) and Semiradskii (Henryk Siemiradzki, 1843–1902); (2) the “decadent” neo-Romantic art of “sentimental” artists, whose major achievements were “countless Madonnas from the ‘prolific German factories’”; and (3) the “decadence” of Realist art of the Wanderers.¹²¹ As if answering Stasov, who accused the World of Art of decadence and decline, Diaghilev mocks the Wanderers and Academics: “There is no decline, because there is no apogee to fall from”.¹²² By making such a statement, the author undermines the authority of all previous achievements of Russian art.

The second section, “The Eternal Struggle”, is devoted to a discussion of “utilitarianism”,¹²³ and the dominance of ethics and social commentary in some art schools and movements. Diaghilev advocates “art for art’s sake”, and for him the “eternal struggle” means a conflict between aestheticism and “utilitarianism”.¹²⁴ Diaghilev compares Russian and European art criticism of the mid-nineteenth century, mentioning Émile Zola, Pierre-Joseph Proudhon, Ferdinand Brunetière, John Ruskin, Tolstoi and Chernyshevskii. In his manifesto, Diaghilev also announces a divorce from Realist didactic moralistic art:

They [“utilitarianists”] request us to remodel symphonies into ceremonial marches and folk songs; to reform paintings into tables for visual teaching methods and to rewrite poems into prescriptions against every dirty illness of triumphant civilization....The greatest strength of art is autonomy, a self-serving principle and freedom (*samotsel’no, samopolezno i glavnoe – svobodno*). Art cannot exist without an idea any more than it can exist without form and paint.¹²⁵

In the third section “The Search for Beauty” (nos. 3–4, 1899), Diaghilev analyzes Ruskin’s pantheistic view¹²⁶ on the beauty of nature and the Realists’ theory of beauty. Applying Ruskin’s premise to contemporary art, the author criticizes

121 Diaghilev, “Slozhnye voprosy” 10–11.

122 Diaghilev, “Slozhnye voprosy” 11.

123 Under the term “utilitarianism” (*utilitaristy* according to Diaghilev’s orthography) Diaghilev understands those philosophers as ones who think that art should be beneficial for society, be subservient to ethics, and teach and nurture the viewer instead of producing beauty for pleasure’s sake only.

124 Diaghilev, “Slozhnye voprosy” 12.

125 Diaghilev, “Slozhnye voprosy” 14–16.

126 According to Kennedy, Diaghilev’s knowledge of English was not good enough to read Ruskin in the original version. Thus, she states that he probably became acquainted with

his idealistic views, considering Ruskin's theory a harmful "sermon" (*propoved'*) for artists.¹²⁷ Diaghilev believes that the main characteristic of artistic talent and creativity is the ability to define the essential and disregard the marginal. He announces the importance of the artist's personality (*lichnost' tvortsa*) and temperament and upholds the principle of individuality:

We need to define the specific, individual features from the point of view of the given artist's personality. The artist's ideas and phenomenon of the artist's personality are the key points of any art work. What is Ruskin's consideration of the function of individuality if not a complete subordination and passive perception of all outside impressions by the artist?¹²⁸

Arguing against Ruskin, Diaghilev claims that the art critic lowers the technical features of art to the level of craftsmanship (*remeslo retushera*) and ignores one of the most important qualities of art – "the charm of simplification",¹²⁹ when the artist, feeling his (sic)¹³⁰ artistic freedom, and with the help of his artistic instincts, notices the most important things and transmits them into his art work using a simplified childlike-light (*detski-svetlyi*) language.

Finally, Diaghilev comes to the conclusion that Ruskin's aesthetic ideas come very close to the views developed by Chernyshevskii. According to Diaghilev, both theoreticians, by coincidence, and approaching this idea from different perspectives, concur in their belief that the beauty of reality is superior to the beauty created by art.¹³¹ Ruskin places nature above art, and Chernyshevskii claims that "the image of the rose existing in reality is better than its imagined ideal".¹³² Diaghilev's polemic against Ruskin's views continues as a comparison of Ruskin's ideas with Tolstoi's thoughts: "The similarity of Ruskin to Chernyshevskii and Tolstoi, those social reformers, who wanted to inculcate a moralistic-utilitarian spirit in art...shows how, through idealisation

Ruskin's aesthetic theory from such books as Robert de la Sizeranne's *Ruskin et la religion de la beauté* (Paris, 1897). Kennedy, *The "Mir iskusstva" Group* 78.

127 Diaghilev, "Slozhnye voprosy" 42.

128 Diaghilev, "Slozhnye voprosy" 43.

129 Diaghilev, "Slozhnye voprosy" 43.

130 Even though many women artists contributed to the development of the Russian arts, Diaghilev, just like his predecessors, consistently uses the pronoun "he" to identify the term "artist" (*khudozhnik*), which in Russian is of masculine gender. While referring to a female artist, the word of a female gender, "*khudozhnitsa*", would be used.

131 Diaghilev, "Slozhnye voprosy" 44.

132 Diaghilev, "Slozhnye voprosy" 44.

and idolization, Ruskin was close to a denial of art".¹³³ According to Diaghilev, Charles Baudelaire and Joris-Karl Huysmans signalled a new step in the development of aesthetic views and the dominance of sensuality over utilitarianism and of art over nature.¹³⁴ The main problem with Ruskin's theory, according to Diaghilev, was the neglect of the artist's individuality: "The only connecting link of all aesthetic contradictions is the solitary creative power, the human personality".¹³⁵

The theme of the last section, "The Foundations for Artistic Evaluation", logically flows from the statement about the importance of the artist's personality in art, an idea that partakes of Symbolist discourses. An artist's sensibility and inspiration, according to Diaghilev, trigger the production of art. According to Diaghilev, art history is not the history of art pieces, but the history of artistic development; art history is the development of artistic personality and temperament.¹³⁶ The appreciation of art involves the correspondence of views between the viewer and the artist (*sootvetstvie mezhdu nami i tvortsom*),¹³⁷ while the complete pleasure derived from aesthetic perception epitomizes "finding the personality of the viewer in the personality of the artist" and the viewer's "correspondence with the artist's point of view".¹³⁸ Diaghilev claims that the main task of an art critic is not only to "scientifically" dissect the artwork, but also to "celebrate art and to glorify every new talent".¹³⁹

At this point, Diaghilev suddenly shifts his attention from "the artistic personality" to the idea of "nationalism": "The character of the artist should be national. It always has to reflect nationality even unwillingly, but naturally. ... Extreme nationalism [perhaps, Diaghilev means Stasov here], however, is disrespectful to the nation".¹⁴⁰ Diaghilev appeals to readers to contemplate and understand the "grandiose harmony" and beauty of Russian national art. At the same time, he believes that Russian artists have to absorb European culture: "the Russian spirit is too strong to be undermined by European influences".¹⁴¹ Diaghilev states the importance of learning from Europe and promoting Russian art in European countries.

133 Diaghilev, "Slozhnye voprosy" 45.

134 Diaghilev, "Slozhnye voprosy" 46.

135 Diaghilev, "Slozhnye voprosy" 49.

136 Diaghilev, "Slozhnye voprosy" 50–2.

137 Diaghilev, "Slozhnye voprosy" 52.

138 Diaghilev, "Slozhnye voprosy" 53.

139 Diaghilev, "Slozhnye voprosy" 55.

140 Diaghilev, "Slozhnye voprosy" 58.

141 Diaghilev, "Slozhnye voprosy" 59.

Diaghilev's editorial statement represented an amalgamation of Western European Symbolist ideas on art, which he and his friends had absorbed while living and travelling in Europe. It was an avant-garde vision that was in opposition to what the Realist camp proclaimed. In terms of the development of Russian art, Diaghilev represented a rejection of the old canons of Academicism, "utilitarianism" and Realism, and a proclamation of the importance of individualism and the significance of the artist's personality and temperament and the "national idea" as part of "national" individualism.

According to Kennedy, this eclectic manifesto is the work of a "dilettante".¹⁴² As was also pointed out by Lapshina, the journal itself was not consistent in realizing the aesthetic program announced by Diaghilev; the contributors often contradicted each other; the views of every single member of the editorial board were evolving and changing throughout the years of publishing.¹⁴³ Eclecticism was reflected not only in the manifesto, but also in the whole construction of the first two double issues. Or, to put it in other words, the textual and paratextual dimensions of the periodical reflected the presence of many voices that expressed contemporary Russian and European art tendencies and illustrated Diaghilev's focus on individuality.

The *World of Art* and its Paratextual Qualities: Materiality and the Visual in the Context of the Editorial Mission Statement and Other Texts

A European Type Journal

Diaghilev conceived the *World of Art* after his grand tour of Europe, which led to his close knowledge of, and acquaintance with, European artists, art reproduction and publication on art themes. It is not surprising that he envisioned the new journal as an equal to the European art periodicals of the day, such as *Pan*, *Jugend*, *Simplicissimus*, *Studio*, *Ver Sacrum*, *La Revue Blanche* and others. These European art journals could be subscribed to (and they likely were) by art lovers in Russia interested in the newest European art. Also the periodicals came from Europe with visitors. Travellers who visited Europe would return home and show the art journals in art circles such as the "society of self-education" to provoke discussion about the newest art trends. These portable "art-shows" presented as art objects stimulated interest in European art and art reproduction. Thus, for example, the French diplomat Charles Birle, a participant of the circle

¹⁴² Kennedy, *The "Mir Iskusstva" Group* 63.

¹⁴³ Lapshina 49.

in 1892 and 1893,¹⁴⁴ subscribed to the French art periodicals *La Revue Blanche* and *La Plume*, which he showed during the meetings; in one of his letters from Vienna, Birle recommended that Benois find the German journal *Pan*, and in 1893 Nourook brought to his friends' attention the graphic art associated with *Jugend* and *Simplicissimus*.¹⁴⁵

As Benois would recall in his memoirs: "We instinctively wanted to get away from the backwardness of Russian art life. We sought to get rid of our provincialism and become closer to the culturally-developed West. We desired to be closer to the purely artistic quest of foreign art schools and escape from the 'low-brow narrativity' (*literaturshchina*) and tendentiousness of the Wanderers, as far as possible from quasi-innovators and decadent Academicism".¹⁴⁶ Both Benois and Diaghilev wanted to promote Russian art abroad. Since the Russian "début in Europe had been unsuccessful",¹⁴⁷ the new periodical, crafted according to examples of Western-European art periodicals of the day, would both promote Russian art in Europe and teach the Russians about European art.

A close examination of the European art press of the turn of the century suggests that Diaghilev chose the German art journal *Pan* (1895–1900) as a model for the *World of Art*.¹⁴⁸ It was issued in 1895 in Berlin by Julius Otto Bierbaum and Julius Meier-Graefe and in 1910 it was reissued by Paul Cassirer and his Pan-Press. Like *Pan*, the *World of Art* became an art-literary periodical and, also like *Pan*, it was printed in a folio-size format, which some contemporaries did not like (Benois, for example). Following *Pan*, the *World of Art* published literary works illustrated by the main artists associated with the periodical, a practice that would continue with *The Golden Fleece* and *Apollo*. The *World of Art* re-used the old Russian Elizabethan type just as *Pan* made a statement by employing a German Gothic type (fig. 2.5).

"Elizabethan type" (*Elizavetinskii shrift*) is the general name for several types created in the type-foundry of the Academy of Sciences in St Petersburg around 1740–60s, during the rule of Elizabeth I (r. 1741–1762). It was a significant change from Peter the Great's civil type, which was introduced in 1707 as a part of

144 Benua, *Vozniknovenie* 11.

145 Kennedy *The "Mir Iskusstva Group"* 150–151.

146 Benua, *Vozniknovenie* 21.

147 Zil'bershtein and Samkov, *Sergei Diaghilev*, vol. 2, 76.

148 Kennedy suggests that "the statement of purpose printed in the beginning of the first volume of *Pan*, informing the reader of need to make new art known to a larger public and 'to give greater attention than hitherto to native art and collect its strivings in clearer form' may have influenced Diaghilev's desire to demonstrate the existence of a Russian national school through the exhibition of Russian and Finnish Artists in January 1898" (Kennedy, *The "Mir Iskusstva Group"* 150).

Die Balinesenfrauen auf Kombof

Unerhört,
Auf Kombof hat man sich empört,
Auf der Insel Kombof die Balinesen
Sind mit Mynheer unzufrieden gewesen.

Und die Mynheers sagt ein Järnen und
Schaudern,
„Aus mit dem Brand, ohne Jögern und
Zaudern“,

Und allerlei Volk, verkracht, verdorben,
Wird von Mynheer angeworben,
Allerlei Leute mit Mausegewehren
Sollen die Balinesen befehren,
Vorwärts, ohne Sinn und Plan,
Aber auch planlos wird es gethan,
Hinterlader arbeitete gut,
Und die Männer liegen in ihrem Blut.

Die Männer. Aber groß anzusehn,
Sind da noch sechzig stolze Frau'n,

Alt' eingeschlossen zu Wehr und Trug
In eines Buddha-Tempels Schutz.
Reichgekleidet, goldgeschmückt,
Ihr jüngstes Kind an die Brust gedrückt,
Hochaufgerichtet eine jede stand,
Den Feind im Auge, den Dolch in der Hand.

Die Kugeln durchschlagen Trepp und Dach,
„Wozu hier noch warten, feig und schwach?“
Und die Thüren auf und hinab in's Thal,
Hoch ihr Kind und hoch den Stahl!
(Am Griffe funkelt der Edelstein)
So stürzen sie sich in des Feindes Reihn.
Die Hälfte fällt todt, die Hälfte fällt wund,
Aber jede will sterben zu dieser Stund,
Und die Legten, in stolzer Todeslust,
Stoßen den Dolch sich in die Brust.

Mynheer derweilen, in seinem Kontor,
Malt sich christlich Kulturelles vor.

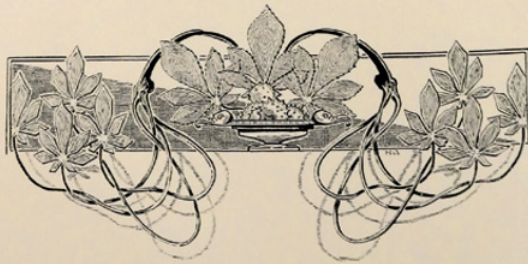


FIGURE 2.5 Page with vignette from Pan, August, 1895.

COURTESY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA LIBRARY.

Peter's language reforms. Peter replaced the old Church-Slavonic script with the new "civil type", which was intended to simplify the printing of secular books.¹⁴⁹ The Elizabethan typefaces created in the Academy of Sciences became known for both their Baroque solemnity and Rococo elegance.¹⁵⁰ At the same time, in spite the fact that the *World of Art* was modelled on the Western European art periodicals, it exemplified a unique Russian art object designed for viewing and reading.

Bakst, whom Diaghilev assigned to work as the "artistic coordinator",¹⁵¹ was responsible for the layout, page design, and arrangement of reproductions; he also experimented with the structure of the journal. Among the members of the editorial board, Bakst was the most experienced graphic designer, as he had participated in abovementioned art periodical *The Artist* (*Khudozhnik*). Due to its visual presentation, the *World of Art* had more of a modern "European" look than its rival *Art and Art Industry*; its appearance significantly narrowed the gap between the Western European and the Russian art press.

The *World of Art* continued the practice of ordering art reproductions abroad because of the poor quality of printing available in Russia in the late nineteenth century (recall the blurry reproductions in *Art and Art Industry*). Thus, major art reproductions (and probably the cover) were printed in Berlin and Helsingfors (today Helsinki, then a part of the Russian Empire) and only less significant pages were printed in St Petersburg press houses owned by Hoppe, Vilborg and I. Kadushin or in A.I. Mamontov's printing house in Moscow, the major press houses in Russia.¹⁵² Only in its third year of publication and onwards (1902–1904), when printing techniques had significantly improved, was the *World of Art* printed exclusively in Russia by the press houses of Vilborg, Golike and B.G. Scamoni.¹⁵³

Filosofov was another important member of the editorial board who did extensive work on creating the physical look of the periodical. He would later describe the struggle for high quality printing and art reproduction that the editorial board faced. He pointed out the technical difficulties they encountered crafting the art periodical, which they envisioned as a work of art. In 1916, in his memoirs, he wrote about the beginnings of the *World of Art*:

Now Russian publishing is extremely improved in comparison to the late nineteenth century. ...The "second generation" [members that joined

149 Georgieva 135.

150 A.G. Shitsgal, *Russkii tipografskii shrift* (Moskva: Kniga, 1985) 59–60.

151 Lapshina 46.

152 This information is stated in the table of contents of each issue of the journal.

153 Dmitrii Filosofov, "Iunosheskie gody Aleksandra Benua," *Nashe Nasledie* 24 (1991): 88.

after 1910, when association was re-established] of the World of Art (*mir-iskusniki*) like Chekhonin, Mitrokhin, Narbut, and others have taught the Russian public to value the beauty of the book. But only twenty years ago, in technical terms, we were in a desert (*u nas byla pustynia araviiskaia*). And we, the dreamers, who for a long time argued about whether we needed to shock the “bourgeois” or “treat them kindly” by showing Vasnetsov’s *Bogatyr*s (*Bogatyri*), had to become typographic technicians first. How much time and energy was spent on technology!¹⁵⁴

In his memoirs, Filosofov highlighted the importance of high-quality printing and reproduction and the *World of Art*’s ultimate concern with the “beauty of the book”. In late Imperial Russia, such recognition of the importance of fine art reproduction and fine publishing came only with the *World of Art* and occurred later than in Europe. The materiality of the periodical, its look, paper and typography, as Filosofov would assert, became the foremost task for innovators in Russian art publishing:

Type was found in the Academy of Sciences. It was authentic Elizabethan type. To be more precise, it was not the type, but its matrices, which were used to cast the type. The necessary enamel-paper was found only in the second year, and the verge paper (who is not using this paper now!) was found only by the third year of publishing. I have to admit that only in 1901 did the journal’s look begin to satisfy the editors. Before that, every issue caused new distress and even despair.¹⁵⁵

The question of materiality rarely interested the editorial boards of art journals published prior to the *World of Art* to such an extent. As Filosofov would recall, it was not an easy task to achieve European quality in art reproduction due, in part, to the incompetence of the press houses. Reproducing vignettes and titles also became a struggle:

The reproductions of paintings were not done properly due to incompetence. ...Creating the matrices was a problem too. Who could imagine that the firm Vilborg, which now is so competitive with Europe, produced matrices of such terrible quality that we had to order them from Europe? Printing was of bad quality too, the drawings were often smeared during printing. The editors spent a lot of time in the printing house.

¹⁵⁴ Filosofov, “Iunosheskie gody” 88.

¹⁵⁵ Filosofov, “Iunosheskie gody” 88.

I remember how Diaghilev and Bakst spent a whole night at the press, when Ostroumova's woodblock had been printed out of several blocks. Only by the third year of publishing were all the problems overcome; and we began to use the Russian-produced matrices and phototypes.¹⁵⁶

Later Benois would quote these words of Filosofov and call them mere "self-justifications" which he expressed in response to Benois's criticism of "pretentious" graphic design and of the content of the first issue.¹⁵⁷ Nevertheless, Filosofov's confessions shed light on the technical difficulties that the editorial board experienced in creating a periodical/art object.

The Title and Logo

There is no information on who was responsible for the expression the "World of Art". Perhaps it was a collective decision made during one of the first meetings of the editorial board. It is known, however, that in his letter of April 1898, Benois wrote to Princess Ekaterina Sviatopolk-Chetvertinskaia (1857–1942), Tenisheva's companion, "Why wouldn't we title the periodical *Revival* (*Vozrozhdenie*)?"¹⁵⁸ According to Benois, such a title would refer to the renewal of the arts and the journal "would plant a few useful views" on art among the public (*nasadit' khot' kakie-to bolee putnye vzgliady*).¹⁵⁹ As Lapshina reports, the other suggested titles were *Forward* (*Vpered*), *New Art* (*Novoe iskusstvo*), *Pure Art* (*Chistoe khudozhestvo*), and *Beauty* (*Krasota*).¹⁶⁰ As Kennedy states, all these proposed titles implied a polemical message that suggested a break with the descriptive art of the Wanderers.¹⁶¹

The name the "World of Art", with its emphasis on an all-encompassing totality of art and its sublimity, might appear to be in opposition to Lev Tolstoi's (1828–1910) essay "What is Art?" ("Chto takoe iskusstvo?" 1897–98).¹⁶² The

¹⁵⁶ Filosofov, "Iunosheskie gody" 88.

¹⁵⁷ Benua, *Moi vospominaniia*, vol. 2, 230–232.

¹⁵⁸ Benua, *Vozniknovenie* 31.

¹⁵⁹ Benua, *Vozniknovenie* 31.

¹⁶⁰ Lapshina 42; Kennedy, *The "Mir Iskusstva" Group* 22–23.

¹⁶¹ Kennedy, *The "Mir Iskusstva" Group* 23.

¹⁶² For the first time the censored chapters from the treatise "What is art?" ("Chto takoe iskusstvo?") were published in 1897–1898 in the journal *The Problems of Philosophy and Psychology* (*Voprosy filosofii i psikhologii*), and the first publication of the censored treatise appeared in 1898 in L.N. Tolstoi, *Sochineniia*. Ch. xv (Moskva, 1898). The uncensored version was translated into English and published in London in 1898. See K.N. Lomunov, "Kommentarii. Vzgliady L.N. Tolstogo na iskusstvo i literaturu," *Sobranie sochinenii v*



FIGURE 2.6
Léon Bakst. Logo for the World of Art (Mir Iskusstva), 1899.
 COURTESY OF THE FRICK ART
 REFERENCE LIBRARY.

great writer thought that art should be governed by religion and thereby easily understood by everybody. The essay was very influential among the cultural elite and provoked debate; in contrast to Tolstoi's essay, the title of the journal seemed to emphasize the editors' idea of "art for art's sake", an all-embracing art universe, lofty and sublime, that existed separately from everyday life. The makers of the *World of Art* lived and created in this art universe, but also intended to share their views with the public and teach it to appreciate art that was different from the didactic art of the Wanderers. As Kennedy points out, the title suggested a wide range of possible interests and implied viewing "Europe and Russia, past and present as one perfect continuous 'world of art'".¹⁶³

The idea of the "World of Art" was expressed in the logo, created by Bakst (fig. 2.6; fig. 2.7). The logo at times reproduced, as here (fig. 2.6), in gold, at other times in black would be consistently printed in the journal centrally positioned on the title page or on the frontispiece page.

dvadtsati dvukh tomakh by L.N. Tolstoi, vol. 15 (Moskva: Khudozhestvennaia literatura, 1983) 403.

163 Kennedy, *The "Mir Iskusstva" Group* 24.



FIGURE 2.7 Title page of the World of Art (Mir Iskusstva) with Léon Bakst's logo, no. 11, 1904. COURTESY OF THE FRICK ART REFERENCE LIBRARY.

Bakst himself explained the image of the eagle in his letter to Benois, which was printed on a piece of paper with the same logo. "Here is my thought: the 'World of Art' is higher than everything earthly. It reigns in the stars, haughty, miraculously and *lonely* (Bakst's *italics*); just as the eagle that sits on the snowy mountaintop. It is 'the eagle of northern countries', i.e. the Russian North".¹⁶⁴

¹⁶⁴ Qtd. in Benua, *Vozniknovenie* 42.

Bakst mentioned that he made several sketches in the zoo and created a “simplified allegorical image”.¹⁶⁵ The symbolism of the eagle, deeply rooted in European heraldry, was employed in the Russian coat of arms as a reference to the Holy Roman Empire. As the *World of Art*’s emblem, it suggested the freedom of art and its universal reign, while the snowy setting referred to the spirit of the Russian North. It could be suggested that this “northern” vision was related to the Scandinavian art that was becoming increasingly popular in Russia after Diaghilev’s exhibits that featured artworks of Finnish, Norwegian, Swedish and Danish painters.¹⁶⁶ The logo consolidated the link with Europe, Scandinavia in particular.

The Cover Page

On the 20th of June, 1898 Diaghilev wrote a letter addressed to several people: Bakst, Benois, Vrubel’, Aleksandr Golovin (1863–1930), Korovin, Lanceray, Maliutin, Polenova, Somov and Iakunchikova. These artists were invited to participate in a competition to design the cover of the *World of Art*. He announced the exact dimensions (33 × 26 cm), and said that the drawing should be made on coloured paper, and that the title “Mir Iskusstva” had to be present.¹⁶⁷ The winner of the competition was the Impressionist painter and theatre set designer Konstantin Korovin,¹⁶⁸ who created a watercolour on a light ivory background (fig. 2.1). The journal was printed with Korovin’s inaugural cover for the first half of the year. Beginning with no. 13 (1899), the journal would be published with Iakunchikova’s cover depicting a swan. All following covers by Bakst, Somov and others would reflect “European” themes and stylizations.

The space of Korovin’s page was visually divided into three parts: the upper part was a symmetrical frieze with the stylized image of an archetypal Northern

165 Qtd. in Benua, *Vozniknovenie* 42.

166 Konstantynow 180.

167 Zil’bershtein and Samkov, *Sergei Diaghilev*, vol. 2, 32.

168 Konstantin Korovin, a graduate of the Moscow College of Painting, Sculpture and Architecture (*Moskovskoe uchilishche zhivopisi, vaianiia i zodchestva*), was a student of the Wanderer Aleksei Savrasov (1830–1897), the eminent Realist landscapist painter, and Vasilii Perov (1834–1882), the master of critical Realism in genre painting. His student years (1875–1882) coincided with the golden age of the Wanderers’ movement. In 1885, Korovin became acquainted with Mamontov, joined the Abramtsevo circle, and participated in the theatrical production as the set designer for Mamontov’s private opera. By the 1890s, he had become a well-established artist. In 1886, 1892 and 1893, Korovin travelled to Paris and became an advocate of Impressionism. The details of Korovin’s biography see in Vladimir Kruglov, *Konstantin Alekseevich Korovin* (Sankt-Peterburg: Khudozhnik Rossi, 2000) 7–20.

Russian village with log houses and references to local agriculture. The grey and rose-coloured sky, with a possible reference to “white nights”, and the sparse northern nature were the main features of the decorative frieze. The stylized curvilinear clouds alluded to Scandinavian landscapes of the Finnish artists such as Gallén-Kallela or Väinö Blomstedt. As Konstantynow has reported, Gallén-Kallela collaborated with Diaghilev during preparation of the first issue of the *World of Art* and was the model “national artist” for Diaghilev and Filosofov. They valued him as a formidable “portraitist” of Finnish northern nature and its spirit.¹⁶⁹ Gallén-Kallela’s art works would be reproduced in the following issues. Korovin’s frieze echoed Gallén-Kallela’s evocative mysticism of simplicity, which in Korovin’s image was expressed in the linear rendering of trees, log houses and a heavy cold sky. In the empty space of the middle part was the title of the journal, done in a type style known as *poluustav* (semi-ustav), which had been used for Old Slavic printed books. The plant motif with kernels of grain that embellished the title was repeated in the frieze, creating visual unity. The lower part of the cover was a vignette (a “stamp” as Benois called it¹⁷⁰) set into the left corner with two fish on an empty grey background. The use of a vast, empty space in the background was groundbreaking and represented something contrasting to the ornate and embellished cover of *Art and Art Industry* (fig. 2.2). Korovin may well have known the equally “empty” covers of the recently published *Ver Sacrum*. This emptiness, which also referred to Japonisme so popular in Europe at that time, represented a radical approach to graphic design and provoked scepticism, criticism and debate from both Korovin’s friends and his enemies.

Benois was overtly ironic and very critical regarding this cover. As he reported, the look of the *World of Art* was Diaghilev’s doing. Diaghilev was concerned about the format, refined printing and the journal’s “provocative” (“*drazniashchii*”) visual expression. As Benois noted in his memoirs, he disliked the “pretentious emptiness” of the cover. He described Korovin’s work as “naïve”,¹⁷¹ and a “drawing made as if for a glazed tile”.¹⁷² He sarcastically noted that perhaps “this naivety was intended to signify the progressive character of the journal”.¹⁷³ Benois also claimed that Korovin had not worked hard enough to create the cover page, therefore it gave the impression that the design was

169 Konstantynow 178.

170 Benua, *Moi vospominaniia*, vol. 2, 231.

171 Benua, *Vozniknovenie* 41.

172 Benua, *Vozniknovenie* 45.

173 Benua, *Moi vospominaniia*, vol. 2 230–231.

merely a sketch.¹⁷⁴ Benois's nephew Lanceray did not like the cover either.¹⁷⁵ In fact, the image of the fish likely had a "glazed tile" prototype: it is quite possible that Korovin derived his "stamp" from Vrubel's *Fish* (*Rybki*), created in Abramtsevo in the 1890s. Korovin, a member of the Abramtsevo circle, knew Vrubel's work very well, as it was executed in the colony when he himself worked in the Abramtsevo ceramic workshop.¹⁷⁶ He needed only to turn one of Vrubel's fish upside-down to create a new design.

The image of the fish on the cover, in this way, established a visual connection to the Abramtsevo arts and crafts revival. The frieze with the village was another indirect reference to the Abramtsevo lifestyle. Benois would likely have disapproved of this particular reference because he envisioned Russian art as something to be Europeanized. In addition, the cover page could have evoked Moscow more than St Petersburg, the city where the journal was conceived. Korovin was a Muscovite, and the "national style" was Moscow's patrimony in contrast to the "European" St Petersburg and its legacy as the "window on Europe".¹⁷⁷ This very fact also made an impression on the Petersburg members of the editorial board. The only person who approved of Diaghilev's choice was Bakst. He labelled the cover "decadently Muscovite",¹⁷⁸ by which he meant that the cover with its stylized simplicity and allusion to Scandinavian art had progressive artistic characteristics.

Stasov, an eager supporter of the "national style", was another who criticized the cover page, responding to its "primitivist" simplicity. He asserted that he appreciated Korovin's theatre set designs for Mamontov's opera, especially those that represented the exterior and interior of Old Russian buildings, but was quite disappointed with his cover:

If they [Korovin and Maliutin] have been commissioned to compose anything according to the "decadent taste", they are awful. Thus, the image of the "village" (most likely a Russian one), which is depicted on Korovin's cover, consists of such houses, such bushes and such linear perspective

174 Benua, *Moi vospominaniia*, vol. 2 231.

175 Evgenii [Eugene] Lansere [Lanceray], *Dnevnik. Kniga pervaiia. Vospitanie chuvstv* (Moskva: Iskustvo – XXI vek, 2008) 399.

176 About Vrubel's majolicas see: V.A. Nevskii, "Abramtsevskaiia keramicheskaiia masterskaia. Maiolika M.A. Vrubelia," Grigorii Sternin et al., *Abramtsevo* (Leningrad: Khudozhnik RSFSR, 1988) 175.

177 The idiom "to hew the window on Europe" (*v Evropu prorubit' okno*) is the famous phrase from Pushkin's poem *The Bronze Horseman*, 1834; it refers to Peter the Great's construction of St Petersburg, which was meant to be the actual "gate" to Europe.

178 Qtd. in A.P. Gusarova, *Konstantin Korovin* (Moskva: Sovetskii khudozhnik, 1990) 77.

and such a sky as could be painted by a three-year-old child who takes a pencil for the first time in his life and awkwardly soils the paper. On the same cover, Korovin put some kind of a “stamp” with two fishes, which could be appropriate for the Japanese or for a package designed for some product, but in an art periodical (even in a bad periodical) it should be eliminated.¹⁷⁹

It is noteworthy that both Stasov and Benois, representatives of opposite camps, accused Korovin of using a primitive style and pointed to its backwardness.¹⁸⁰ In this “naivety” (Benois) and “child-like drawing” (Stasov), both critics saw a threat to art journal design. Benois, whose “Europeanism” was Franco-centric, but rather of a traditional dimension, expected less radical execution and more of a Western-European look for the cover, while Stasov saw it as a mockery of the “national style” and graphic design in general.

The flatness and “emptiness” of the cover page caused a furor in the artistic milieu of Russia (which was quite tight in the late nineteenth century). The two concurrent major art journals – *Art and Art Industry* and the *World of Art* – became embodiments of opposite “worlds of art”; the *World of Art* represented groundbreaking views and a provocative cover design, proclaiming a message of emerging Art Nouveau and Primitivism and a move toward flatness and simplicity.

Graphic Design and Art Reproduction: Abramtsevo and Viktor Vasnetsov in the World of Art

In contrast to the simplicity of Korovin’s Art Nouveau cover, Diaghilev’s previously discussed “Complex Questions” was crowned by Viktor Vasnetsov’s flowery, ornate and flamboyant title vignette alluding to the Russian Baroque (fig. 2.8). Red, black, turquoise, pink, green and brown colours and gilding (a feature reminiscent of *Art and Art Industry*) were employed in this vignette that invokes manuscript illumination. The title of the article was also set in the Old Slavic *poluustav*, and embellished with an old Russian-style manuscript dropped capital, again resembling the visual aesthetics of *Art and Art Industry*. The symmetrical vignette represented a frame with a motif of lilies of the valley, commonly found in Russia during the spring, the symbol of spring and renewal. The focal point of the decorative vignette was a flower with a red crown, which might be seen as a visual representation of “The Scarlet Flower” (“*Alen’kii*

179 Stasov, “Nishchie dukhom” 236.

180 For details on “primitiveness” and “Primitivism” see Chapter 1 in Colin Rhodes, *Primitivism and Modern Art* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1994).

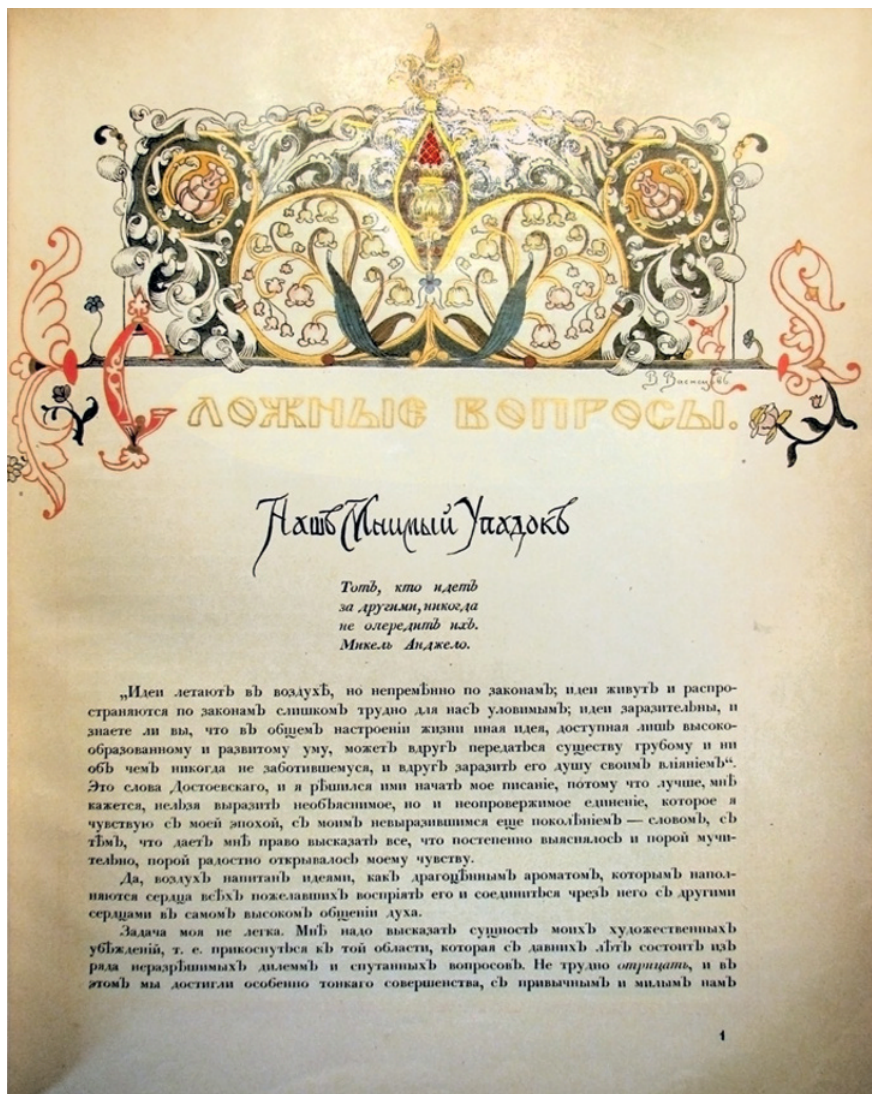


FIGURE 2.8 Viktor Vasnetsov. Title vignette for the World of Art (Mir Iskusstva), no. 1, 1899. Lithograph.

COURTESY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS AT URBANA-CHAMPAIGN LIBRARY.

tsvetochek”), the famous fairy tale by Sergei Aksakov, the first owner of Abramtsevo country estate.¹⁸¹

In 1883, Mamontov staged the play “The Scarlet Rose” (“*Alaia roza*”), his retelling of Aksakov’s “The Scarlet Flower”. Vasnetsov participated in creating the theatre set and made a sketch for the poster. This symbolic reference indicated the cultural links between Abramtsevo and the *World of Art* and was meant to convey an appreciation of Mamontov and Tenisheva’s art colonies, which were visually present in the reproductions (fig. 2.9).¹⁸² However, while Korovin continued to design vignettes for the *World of Art*, Vasnetsov participated only in the first inaugural issue. A former member of the Wanderers,

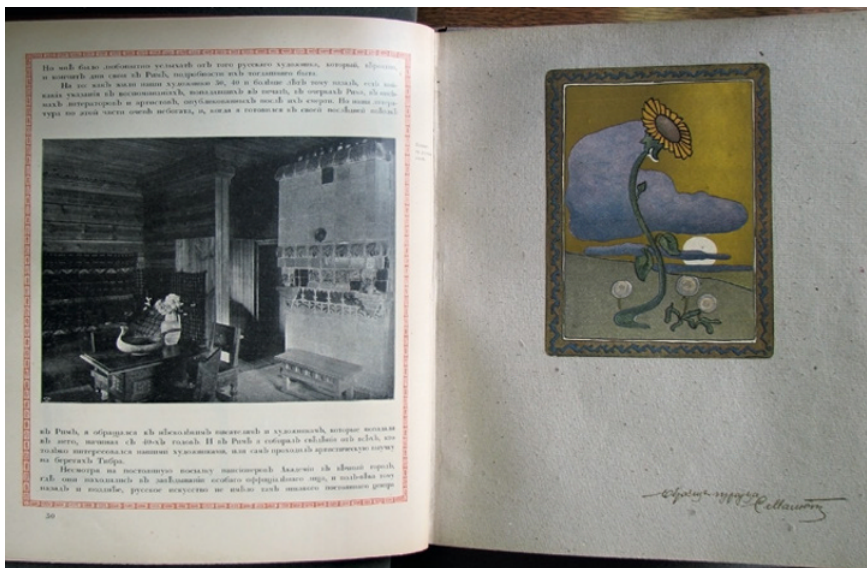


FIGURE 2.9 Art reproductions in the *World of Art* (Mir Iskusstva), 1899. Room in the “Russian style” from Abramtsevo (on the left). Photograph. Sergei Maliutin. Design for the glazed tile. Chromo-autotype.

COURTESY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS AT URBANA-CHAMPAIGN LIBRARY.

- 181 The plot of “The Scarlet Flower” was borrowed from the French fairy tale “Beauty and the Beast”; in the Russian version, the protagonists were put into a Russian setting to resemble a Russian folkloric narrative.
- 182 Benois, the distant observer of what was happening with his friends in Russia, did not support the inclusion of Vasnetsov’s designs in the avant-garde periodical, considering Vasnetsov an artist of only modest talent. He considered Vasnetsov a good artist of decorative art, who deserved only two pages in his *History of Russian Painting in the XIX Century*. See Aleksandr Benua, *Istoriia russkoi zhivopisi v XIX veke* (Moskva: Respublika, 1998) 387–389. Diaghilev’s position toward Vasnetsov was the opposite.

Vasnetsov might not have been very comfortable participating in the assertive enterprise of young artists who sought European recognition. As Tenisheva recalled in her memoirs, Vasnetsov did not like the first issue of the *World of Art* and even refused to sell Tenisheva his watercolours for their subsequent reproduction in the periodical.¹⁸³

Ironically, the two ideologically opposite periodicals, *Art and Art Industry* and the *World of Art*, began their first issues with reproductions of Vasnetsov's works. Diaghilev had commissioned the artist to design a vignette and asked his permission to reproduce his artworks; however, *Art and Art Industry* was also preparing to publish an excerpt from Stasov's memoirs about the artist (fig. 2.10) as well as Stasov's article "Tsar Berendei and his Palace" ("Tsar' Berendei i ego palaty"),¹⁸⁴ which described Vasnetsov's theatre set for Mamontov's opera *The Snow Maiden* (*Snegurochka*). The opposing periodicals and their key leaders appreciated his art, but interpreted the meaning and significance of his works differently.

Stasov and others associated with *Art and Art Industry* valued the fact that Vasnetsov had once been affiliated with the Wanderers' movement, which he joined in 1878,¹⁸⁵ and that he had created images of typical peasants and



FIGURE 2.10

Title page for Vladimir Stasov's article "Viktor Vasnetsov and his Works" in *Art and Art Industry* (*Iskusstvo i khudozhestvennaia promyshlennost'*), no. 1, 1899. The explanation under the vignette reads: "From a Gospel (Evangelii) of the 16th century. Manuscript of the L'viv Stauropagian Institute, 16th century, No. 232 (in the center a cherub from a fresco in a Kyiv (Kiev) Cathedral)."

COURTESY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS AT URBANA-CHAMPAIGN LIBRARY.

183 Tenisheva 163.

184 Vladimir Stasov, "Tsar' Berendei i ego palaty," *Iskusstvo i khudozhestvennaia promyshlennost'* 1 (1898): 97–8.

185 Valkenier, *Russian Realist Art* 40.



FIGURE 2.11 Viktor Vasnetsov. *Bogatyrs (Bogatyri)* reproduced in *the World of Art (Mir Iskusstva)*, no. 1–2, 1899. Heliogravure.
COURTESY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS AT URBANA-CHAMPAIGN LIBRARY.

low-class urban dwellers that expressed social issues.¹⁸⁶ When the major members of the Wanderers became interested in the peasant folkloric worldview, a shift toward visual interpretation of magic folktales and legends (*byliny*) occurred in Vasnetsov's art. He moved away from didactic art and depictions of inequality and focused on romanticizing Russian folklore,¹⁸⁷ which was not appreciated by his colleagues (Stasov in particular). The turn to folkloric subjects in Vasnetsov's art happened after his stay in Paris in 1876. It was there that his most famous work, *Bogatyrs (Bogatyri, 1898)*, painted in Abramtsevo and

186 For example Vasnetsov's paintings *From Apartment to Apartment (S kvartiry na kvartiru)*, 1876 and *The Card Game (Preferans)*, 1879.

187 Inspiration for these new themes came from *lubki*, which he started to collect around the 1870s; his *Book Shop (Knizhnaia lavka)*, 1876 is devoted to *lubki* dissemination in Russia. See Eleonora Paston, *Viktor Vasnetsov* (Moskva: Slovo, 1996) 6–7. In one of his letters to Stasov, Vasnetsov wrote that he “lived in the village among peasants (*sredi muzhikov i bab*) and loved them not in ‘populist’ terms (*ne ‘narodnicheski’*), but loved them as his friends”. He listened with delight to their songs and folktales “sitting at the stove (*sidia na pechi*)”. See N.A. Iaroslavtseva, ed. and comp., *Viktor Mikhailovich Vasnetsov. Pis'ma. Dnevnik. Vospominaniia. Suzhdeniia sovremennikov* (Moskva: Iskusstvo, 1987) 154.

reproduced in the *World of Art*, was conceived (fig. 2.11). Both Stasov and Diaghilev considered *The Bogatyrs* one of the artist's masterpieces.¹⁸⁸ The painting became a desirable piece for reproduction in both *Art and Art Industry* and the *World of Art*: Sobko and Diaghilev both requested permission to reproduce it. Diaghilev won only because his request came first.¹⁸⁹ Vasnetsov, however, regretted giving his works to Diaghilev because he did not provide any explanatory commentary to the artworks. In reply, Diaghilev explained to Vasnetsov that he had commissioned an art historian, Prakhov [sic], to write an article, but the latter refused at the very last moment, so the periodical came out without the planned commentary.¹⁹⁰

Both Stasov and Diaghilev valued the "national" themes in Vasnetsov's artworks. But each understood them in completely different ways. For Stasov, Vasnetsov's folkloric turn was the wrong path.¹⁹¹ In 1898, however, in an article published in *Art and Art Industry*, Stasov's negative opinion about Vasnetsov changed completely. Now he praised Vasnetsov's theatre set for Mamontov's opera *The Snow Maiden*, acclaiming his costume designs as "an impressive gallery of truth, nationality (*natsional'nosti*) and talent, which is one of the main reasons for Vasnetsov's appreciation and significance in Russian art".¹⁹² It was "Russianness", a specifically national Russian originality (*osobennaia natsional'naia russkaia samostoitel'nost'*) and not religiousness and mysticism that Stasov appreciated in Vasnetsov's drafts for the murals of the Vladimir Cathedral in Kiev (Kyiv).¹⁹³

188 Stasov, "Viktor Mikhailovich Vasnetsov" 183.

189 Diaghilev requested this work in July 1898 and Sobko's request came only in September (See Diaghilev's letter to Vasnetsov of July 26, 1898 and Sobko's letter of September 24, 1898 in Iaroslavtseva 276–77). Vasnetsov neither disdained the "decadent" publication nor left Stasov's camp and played double. All his letters to Stasov showed his respect, even though that he knew that Stasov's opinion about him and his work had changed a number of times, and he knew of Stasov's rigorous criticism.

190 See Diaghilev's letter of November 25, 1898 in Iaroslavtseva 279. It is important to remind that Prakhov was from the opposite ideological camp associated with *Art and Art Industry*.

191 When Vasnetsov submitted his painting *After Igor's Battle with the Polovtsy* (*Posle poboishcha Igoria Svatoslavicha s polovtsami*) for the Wanderers' exhibit in 1880, Stasov totally ignored this work in his review. Two years later he wrote: "Such a talented...artist as Vasnetsov became unrecognizable when he began to busy himself with Russian antiquity" (Qtd. in Valkenier, *Russian Realist Art* 85). This painting looked too avant-gardist in terms of the Wanderers' movement, so his counterparts refused to exhibit this painting, which resulted in Vasnetsov's decision to leave the Association. Repin was among those few Wanderers who accepted and praised Vasnetsov's thematic innovation. See A.K. Lazuko, *Viktor Mikhailovich Vasnetsov* (Leningrad: Khudozhnik RSFSR, 1990) 39–42.

192 Stasov, "Viktor Mikhailovich Vasnetsov," 171.

193 Stasov, "Viktor Mikhailovich Vasnetsov," 174.

If Stasov associated Vasnetsov with the Wanderers and nationalism “in political terms”,¹⁹⁴ Diaghilev and the *World of Art*’s editorial team considered Vasnetsov’s artwork a Russian reflection (or expression) of the artistic reinterpretation of national folkloric themes that were popular in Europe. Diaghilev perceived Vasnetsov’s art as a kind of “foundation” (*tochka opory*) that might help Russian art to overcome what was perceived as its backwardness and become marketable in Europe:

Who are our artists that are successful in Europe? I do not say that there is no chance that we might have such important artists, but currently there are no artists whom we could show abroad....In the West our artists do not learn; they get lost and remember nothing, except those trite formal details that annoy your eyes. If Russian art had an underpinning, a single artist like Edelfeldt, we would show what we are worth (*esli by nam dali tochku opory, odnogo takogo Edel’fel’ta, my by pokazali, chego my stoim*).¹⁹⁵

Albert Edelfelt (1854–1905) was a Swedish-Finnish artist, the first from his country to achieve international success. At the time of the launch of the *World of Art*, Finland was part of the Russian Empire, so for Diaghilev, Edelfelt was associated with foreign success in Europe, and exemplified the possibility for Russian art to become marketable in Europe. Diaghilev expected Vasnetsov to be as marketable in Europe as was Edelfelt; moreover, for him Vasnetsov epitomized the purely European quest for national art. Diaghilev wrote that Russian art now “returns to the search for *our* [Diaghilev’s *italics*, i.e. Russian] art, and for that we should pay homage to Vasnetsov. Only a combination of our nationality with the high artistic culture of our neighbours [Scandinavians] can become the basis for the beginning of the new golden age of Russian art and our arrival in the West”.¹⁹⁶

In issue 7–8, 1899, Diaghilev would publish “On Viktor Vasnetsov’s Exhibit” (“K vystavke V.M. Vasnetsova”),¹⁹⁷ which took place in February 1899 at the Academy of Arts in St Petersburg, where the artist showed 38 paintings. Diaghilev’s response was positive and laudatory:

194 In 1906, Filosofov would write in Stasov’s obituary: “His Russianness was not cultural, but political and quite superficial as well as was his Realism”. See Dmitrii Filosofov, “V.V. Stasov,” *Zagadki russkoi kul’tury* by D.V. Filosofov (Moskva: NPK Intelvak, 2004) 287.

195 Sergei Diaghilev, “Vystavka v Gel’singforse,” *Mir Iskusstva* (*Khudozhestvennaia khronika*) 1–2 (1899): 3–4.

196 Diaghilev, “Vystavka v Gel’singforse” 4.

197 Sergei Diaghilev, “K vystavke V.M. Vasnetsova,” *Mir Iskusstva* 7–8 (1899). See also the re-publication of the text in Iaroslavtseva 329–331.

The names of Surikov, Repin and Vasnetsov are joined together today. This group defined the direction for contemporary Russian painting... Never before has the national consciousness been expressed so loudly in Russian art as in the oeuvre of these artists. From charming Levitskii to dull Kramskoi, our entire art was under Western influence and for the most part was harmfully Germanized. ...The first and the main merit of Surikov, Repin, and Vasnetsov was that they were not afraid to be themselves. ...They challenged the West and, thanks to the strength of their spirit, they destroyed this earlier rigor of Westernization. They dared to become closer acquainted with the hostile West. When Vasnetsov walked around the Vatican, or in Paris observed closely the works of Burne-Jones, he did not want to resign. But namely here, in the moment of admiration of foreign art, he fully understood all his strength and fascination with his primordial nationality.

Thus, the scales fell from our eyes and we began to look around – and this is the main merit of our three [Surikov, Repin and Vasnetsov] teachers. They are the primitives (*primitivy*) of our national revival.¹⁹⁸

The key point in this passage is Vasnetsov's absorption (or knowledge) of Western art and the resulting creation of his best paintings. For Diaghilev, Vasnetsov's art represented an amalgamation of the national spirit expressed in folklore-inspired European and Russian art, along with the Pre-Raphaelite Burne-Jones's mysticism.¹⁹⁹

No other artist received as much attention in the first issue of the *World of Art* as did Vasnetsov. His sixteen reproductions included landscapes, sketches for religious paintings (fig. 2.12), designs and studies for *The Battle of Scythians* (*Bitva skifov*, 1881), *The Knight at the Crossroads* (*Vitiaz' u trekh dorog*, 1882) and Vasnetsov's aforementioned *Bogatyr*s, 1898 (fig. 2.11). Benois, however, considered the inclusion of Vasnetsov in the first issue as resulting from Filosofov's influence on Diaghilev during the period prior to the periodical's

198 Diaghilev, "K vystavke V.M. Vasnetsova" in Iaroslavl'tseva 329–30.

199 In regards to Burne-Jones's influence on Vasnetsov, Diaghilev's observations were certainly true: in 1900 Vasnetsov would start his *Sleeping Princess* (*Spiashchaia Tsarevna*, 1900–1926) and would continue working on it for the rest of his life. This work resembled Burne-Jones's *Sleeping Beauty* (*The Rose Bower*), 1870–1873 in composition, certain renditions of characters, and extensive use of decorative ornamentality. If Burne-Jones depicts the rose encircling the frame and drapery at the background, in Vasnetsov's work, the dense centuries-aged forest surrounds the Princess's bed. Vasnetsov puts his Princess into a folkloric Russian setting to create a formidable example of the monumental fairy tale "illustration".



FIGURE 2.12 Viktor Vasnetsov. *St Nikolai, St Nestor the Chronicler and St Prokopius of Ustiug. Sketches. Art reproductions in the World of Art (Mir Iskusstva), no. 1–2, 1899.*

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publication.²⁰⁰ In 1928, Benois would quote Nouvel's letter of June 1898 that illustrates the split in the editorial board on Vasnetsov:

The debates are very interesting. At the last meeting a fundamental question about high and low art apropos of Viktor Vasnetsov and French draughtsmen (Forain, Steinlen, Helleu, etc.) was posed. At some point, especially after visiting Kiev and Moscow, Serezha [Diaghilev] and Dima [Filosofov] began to worship Vasnetsov. They see him as the new pharaoh of Russian art and acknowledge him as a genius, a radiant phenomenon of new Russia, the idol to whom we have to kneel and pray. The protest from our side [Nouvel, Bakst, Somov], the people who do not confuse cultural-historical significance with pure artistic value, leads to accusing us of lack of education and absence of knowledge about Russia, and total absence of national Russian feelings. They nicknamed us "foreigners"! No doubt, due to that attitude toward Vasnetsov, Dima [Filosofov] and Serezha [Diaghilev] disregarded the French draughtsmen; moreover, Dima dubbed their oeuvre "brothel" art. However, it gladdens me, because it gives us the grounds and reasons for a real struggle. Only real struggle can result in something worthy.²⁰¹

The inclusion of Vasnetsov in the first issue thus created "ideological" camps within the editorial board that echoed the debates between the Westernizers and Slavophiles.

Toward Europeanism

If the beginning of "The Complex Questions" opened with Vasnetsov's vignette, the section "The Search for Beauty" (published in issue 3–4, 1899) was decorated with Somov's drawing (fig. 2.13). The title was made in a calligraphic hand script without any references to the "national" *poluustav*, which was used at the start of "The Complex Questions" ("Our So-called Decline") and the title on the cover. The calligraphic script evoked the italic style, which corresponded well to the Elizabethan type. The vignette, a colourful watercolour, a glued-in inset by Somov, represented a historicizing "European" tendency rather than the "national" theme. The dramatic shift signalled the cosmopolitan face of contemporary Russian art, previously promoted in Diaghilev's exhibits that so annoyed Stasov.

200 Filosofov's family was quite influential among St Petersburg's cultural elite, and his mother, Anna Filosfova (née Diaghileva, 1837–1912), one of the first feminist leaders and fighters for women's rights, was one of Stasov's best friends. Such a close connection to Stasov might result in an appreciation of the "national style" in contrast to Benois's Europeanism.

201 Benua, *Vosniknovenie* 40–41.

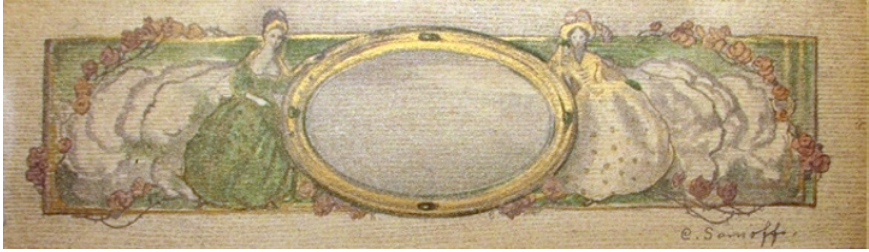


FIGURE 2.13 *Konstantin Somov. Vignette for the World of Art (Mir Iskusstva), no. 3-4, 1899. Glued-in lithograph with gilding.*

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The rectangular vignette showed two women dressed according to late eighteenth or early nineteenth century fashion, set against clouds and curves of rose garlands. They hold an empty oval gilded frame, which seems to be a mirror. The whole notion of Rococo – the gentle pastel colours, clouds, roses, gilding, and the mirror – is visible in the image, which serves as a graphic design element not only for the text, but also creates a visual connection with the art reproductions chosen for this section: five women's portraits by Dmitrii Levitskii (1735–1822), a major Russian imperial painter of Ukrainian origin. These portraits also implied a contemporary French Rococo influence and depicted the court women in their everyday pursuits, such as music, dance lessons or noble leisure (fig. 2.14). The second part of the article featured photo reproductions of six sculptural works by Prince Paolo Trubetskoi (1866–1938), a follower of Impressionism and Art Nouveau, which were also tinged with the Rococo-revival influence and featured one of eight Trubetskoi's sculptural portraits of Tolstoi, the writer, whom Diaghilev respected but criticized (fig. 2.15).

The Europeanization in the Russian arts has a long history. At the turn of the century, Europe and its main artistic centers – Paris, Munich and London, and their salons, galleries and private art studios – became attractive destinations for innovative young Russians who were eager to obtain up-to-date European artistic experiences. As was already mentioned, Diaghilev travelled to Europe (Italy, Britain, France, Germany, Finland and other countries) and visited the studios of the foremost artists, and collected their art; Benois, who considered himself a European Russian, lived in France for several years (1896–1899) and absorbed the European spirit; his closest friend Somov studied at the Academy of Colarossi in Paris for two years (1897–1899); Benois's nephew Lanceray also took classes at the Academy of Colarossi and the Academy of Julian in Paris for three years (1895–1898); Bakst lived in Europe in 1891 and in 1893–1896; in Paris he attended classes at Jean-Léon Gérôme's studio and the Academy of Julian.

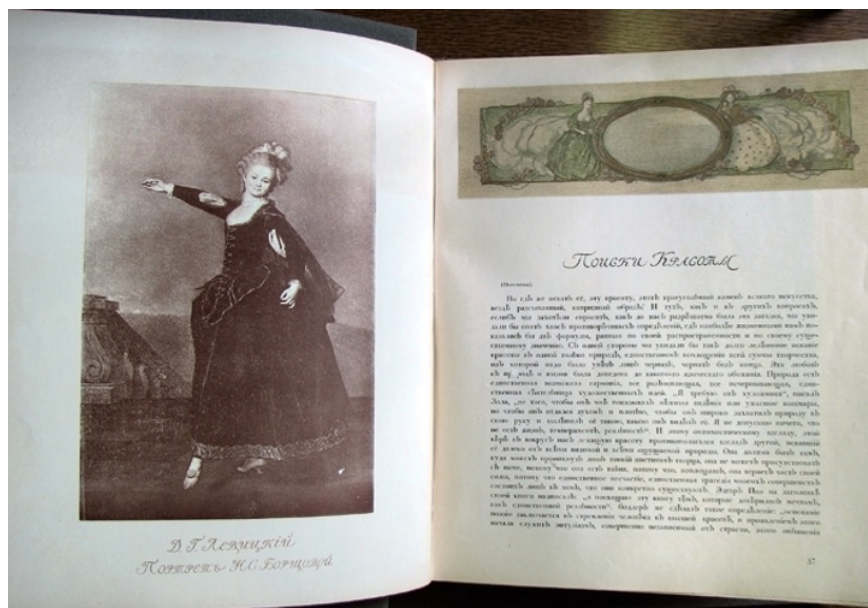


FIGURE 2.14 *The World of Art* (Mir Iskusstva), no. 3-4, 1899 with art reproduction of Dmitrii Levitskii's Portrait of N.S. Borshchova, 1776. Photograph.

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By the time of their arrival in France and their exposure to the European art of the day, according to Ken Ireland, the Rococo revival had already been institutionalized by the French Third Republic (1870–1940) as its national patrimony.²⁰² Eighteenth-century French visual culture had an impact not only in France; a large part of late-nineteenth-century Western Europe experienced an ongoing fascination with the Rococo: its second and third revivals, neo-Rococo or the style Pompadour, were favoured by several generations of Europeans.²⁰³

202 Numerous “Rococo” projects, renovations and reconstructions were launched. The châteaux at Versailles and Chantilly and the Rococo core of the Bibliothèque Nationale achieved new grandeur and splendour; the Louvre established a permanent display of eighteenth-century furniture and applied arts. Current Paris fashions of the late 1890s were modeled on those found in Watteau and Boucher’s paintings; furniture, jewelry, embroidery, interior décor, everything that was considered fashionable and in good taste was unequivocally inspired by Rococo. See Ken Ireland, *Cythera Regained? The Rococo Revival in European Literature and the Arts, 1830–1910* (Madison & Teaneck: Fairleigh Dickinson UP, 2006) 163–172.

203 French illustration and drawing in the 1890s–1900s were fruitful for the Rococo revival – Fernand-Auguste Besnier and Adolphe Lalauze produced the Rococo-inspired *fête galantes*;

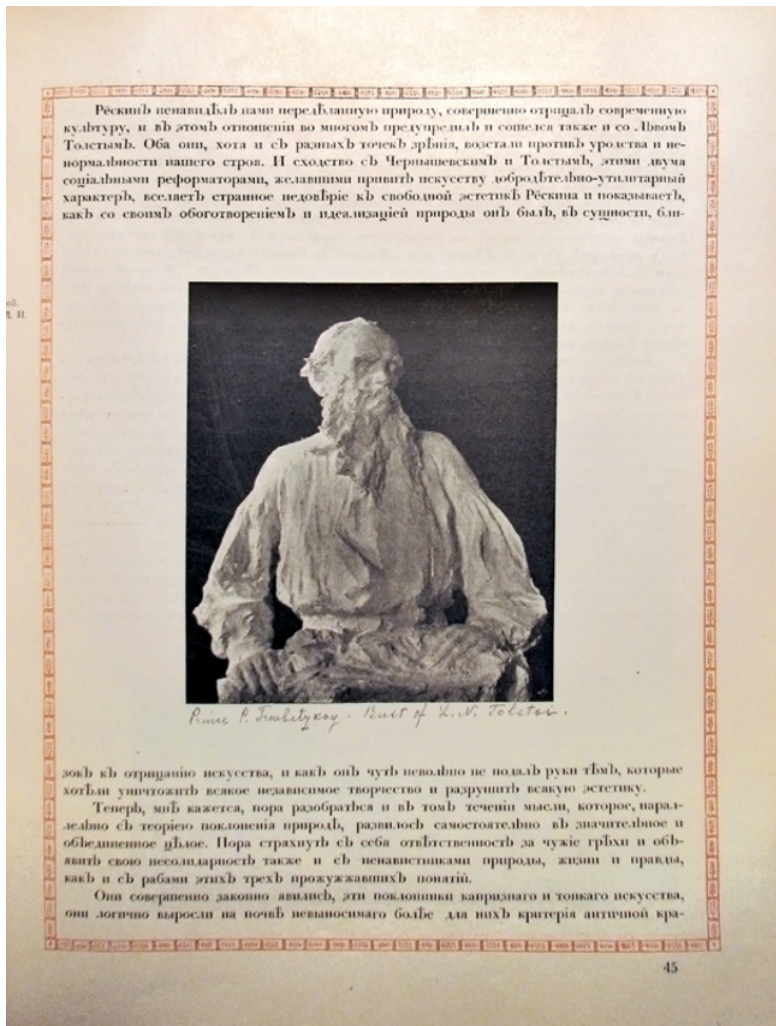


FIGURE 2.15 *Paolo Trubetskoï. Portrait of Lev Tolstoy, ca. 1890s, reproduced in the World of Art (Mir Iskusstva), no 1, 1899. Photo-reproduction.*
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Edgar Degas and Auguste Renoir alluded to Rococo in their use of colour, shades and nuances as well as the ephemeral expressionism of chalks and pastels in some of their works; Paul Helleu and Jules Cheret were influenced by Watteau; and Edouard Manet and Berthe Morisot also were inspired by Rococo art. See details in Ireland 163–172; Melissa Lee Hyde, “Rococo Redux. From the Style Moderne of the Eighteenth Century to Art Nouveau,” *Rococo: The Continuing Curve, 1730–2008*, ed. Sarah D. Coffin et al. (New York: Smithsonian and Copper-Hewitt, National Design Museum, 2008) 19.

Exposed to the “Rococo fashion” in France, Somov²⁰⁴ created Rococo-inspired *fête galantes*; and his vignette in the *World of Art* (fig. 2.13) was his homage to this fashionable European tendency. Somov and his friends imported these visions to Russia, which contrasted to the modern expressions of the “national style” by Vasnetsov, Polenova, Iakunchikova, Korovin and others. The appearance of Somov’s vignette among the national revivalist imagery and graphic design of the journal signaled a move toward bringing European themes into Russian art and design; in addition to this, it marked a shared appreciation for eighteenth-century art, its themes and styles.

Not only Russian designers participated in design of the first issue. Diaghilev purchased vignettes from several European artists. Thus, Felix Vallotton’s vignette represented another connection to European art (fig. 2.16). Vallotton (1865–1925), associated with *Les Nabis*, was valued by the “circle” participants. As Benois writes in his memoirs, Vallotton’s prints were introduced by Alfred Nourok, who was, to a certain extent, responsible for introducing the “European” tastes to the future the *World of Art*. Benois describes that Vallotton’s compositions made a strong impression on him, so he purchased several prints and visited the artist, but “got a cold reception.”²⁰⁵ The appearance of Vallotton’s prints in the *World of Art* was not accidental. His bold approach to woodcut, black-and-white flatness and simplification of details reflected the same tendency toward “European” Primitivism that would be expressed in Iakunchikova’s cover design for the *World of Art*.

Issues nos. 1–2 and 3–4 were also embellished with a decorative red frame (fig. 2.15; fig. 2.16; fig. 2.17) that embraced every page (the exception being the title page for “The Search for Beauty”). Only later issues were published without it. This border, made by Nataliia Davydova, also a member of the Abramtsevo circle, referenced folk woodcarving design or the *lubok*. Thus, Levitskii’s fine and elegant aristocratic ladies in crinolines and Impressionistic sculptures by Trubetskoi framed in Davydova’s folk-style woodcarving borders created a message of Art Nouveau “visual hybridity”. This hybridity reflected the current situation in Russian art: the nationalist and cosmopolitan visions intermingled.

The art reproductions in the section “The Foundations of Artistic Evaluation” featured the works of the Frenchmen Pierre Puvis de Chavannes (fig. 2.17) and

204 About Somov, see Galina El'shevskaia, *Korotkaia kniga o Konstantine Somove* (Moskva: Novoe literaturnoe obozrenie, 2003); E.V. Zhuravleva, *Konstantin Andreevich Somov* (Moskva: Iskusstvo, 1980); Sergei Ernst, *K.A. Somov* (S.-Peterburg: Izdanie Obshchiny Sv. Evgenii, 1918); John Bowlit, “Konstantin Somov,” *Art Journal* 30.1 (Autumn 1970): 31–36.

205 Benua, *Vospominaniia* vol. 2, 153–154.



FIGURE 2.16 *The World of Art* (Mir Iskusstva), no. 3-4, 1899 with photo-reproduction of Paolo Trubetskoi's *Portrait of a Man* (on the top) and Felix Vallotton's vignette (in the bottom).

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Gustave Moreau, and the Englishmen Aubrey Beardsley and Burne-Jones. These works exemplified the newest European art trends, featuring Rococo (Beardsley), Classical (Puvis de Chavannes) revivalist tendencies and Symbolist (Burne-Jones, Moreau) exposure. European art, however, was followed by reproductions of Abramtsevo arts and crafts and Russian crafts of the seventeenth-eighteenth centuries from the Historical Museum in Moscow (fig. 2.18). Thus, the inaugural issues of the *World of Art* represented an



FIGURE 2.17 Art reproduction of artworks by Pierre Puvis de Chavannes (left and right) in the *World of Art* (*Mir Iskusstva*), no. 3-4, 1899.

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amalgamation of European themes and the “national style” expressed both in art reproduction and graphic design – Korovin’s cover, Davydova’s frame, and Vasnetsov’s vignettes.

Viewing vs. Reading: Word-Image Intermediality

The *World of Art* was designed not only for reading, but also for viewing; moreover, viewing was probably more important for the journal’s creators than reading. In such an element as the table of contents, the list of illustrations preceded that of literature and art criticism (an unusual practice for the earlier periodicals). This fact speaks for itself and proves the primary importance of showing/viewing over speaking/reading. In the *World of Art*, the editors were concerned more with the visual presentation and the quality of art reproduction than with abstract communication between the authors and the reader. Their personal preference for the *visual* over the *textual* was at the core of the creation of the first inaugural issues.

The *World of Art* established the concept that correspondence between verbal message and its pictorial component is not necessary for the new art periodical aesthetic. Thus, to a certain degree, the words and images in the first issue of the *World of Art* existed as if in separate worlds; it was the reader’s responsibility to link visual elements with the right passages of the text.



FIGURE 2.18 *The World of Art* (Mir Iskusstva), no. 3-4, 1899, with photo-reproduction of old Russian embroidery from the Historical Museum in Moscow and Erik Werenskiold's end piece.

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Readers had to become co-authors and find those images that, in their opinion, corresponded to each point of the editorial statement or other textual messages. Such a process of reading and viewing could create confusion if readers were not prepared to fulfill the task required of them. The reader was expected to be artistically and aesthetically educated and at least be familiar with general tendencies of contemporary European art as well as with current Russian art achievements. He or she was meant to become a viewer first, since the editors showed more than they said. And it was important to show: the general public was unfamiliar with contemporary European and Russian art and knew little of Levitskii, having been consistently exposed to the assertive Wanderers' travelling exhibits and the official Academic art.

In terms of visual-verbal communication, however, it complicated the perception of ideas. Thus, textual passages often did not correspond to art reproductions, which told a separate story. For example, Trubetskoi's portrait of Tolstoi (fig. 2.15) accompanied the text of the editorial manifesto; however, it visually challenged its main textual statements that criticized the famous writer. Perhaps, the reader was expected to assume that the editorial board valued Trubetskoi's innovative approach to sculpture, but did not support Tolstoi's views. Also reproduction of Vasnetsov's works and Abramtsevo and Talashkino crafts was not supported by any textual information, so the reader might only infer that Vasnetsov or Abramtsevo were of chief importance for the journal's creators.

Moreover, the editor-in-chief Diaghilev permitted manipulations with texts and images. At first sight, the ideal textual-paratextual interplay was achieved in the Danish art historian Karl Madsen's article about Erik Werenskiöld (1855–1938), a Norwegian painter and draughtsman²⁰⁶ (fig. 2.19). This article, translated into Russian from Danish, was devoted to Werenskiöld's illustrations. The works of Werenskiöld were the epitome of graphic art for the editors of the journal and for Diaghilev himself. All the illustrations and graphic design of the article seemed to work in harmony with Madsen's text. However, there were some peculiar inconsistencies. The article was presented as if divided into two parts; the first part was signed by Madsen, while the last pages of the article remained unsigned and without any explanation, appearing as though they were a continuation of Madsen's text, accompanied even by the same graphic design style and art reproduction. Marit Werenskiöld, a scholar of Scandinavian art and the granddaughter of the famous artist, has suggested that those final (unsigned) pages were written by Diaghilev himself and then added to Madsen's text. She reports, however, that Diaghilev reinterpreted Madsen's original article, which described the early works of the artist, namely his illustrations to Peter Christen Asbjørnsen and Jørgen Moe's collections of Norwegian folk tales. After Diaghilev's editing, however, Madsen's words became a reference to a different series of Werenskiöld's works, namely to his recent drawings for Snorri's *Sagas*.²⁰⁷ Diaghilev's own piece, which was added to Madsen's narration, also concentrated on a specific discussion of the illustrations for Snorri's *Sagas*. Illustrations that supported the text were identified simply as "Illustrations of Norwegian Legends" ("Illiustratsii k Norvezhskim

206 Karl Madsen, "Erik Werenskiöld," *Mir Iskusstva* 1–2 (1899): 17–19.

207 Marit Werenskiöld, "Serge Diaghilev and Erik Werenskiöld," *Konsthistorisk Tidskrift/ Journal of Art History* 60.1 (1991): 36. Snorri Sturluson (1179–1241) was an Icelandic historian and poet.

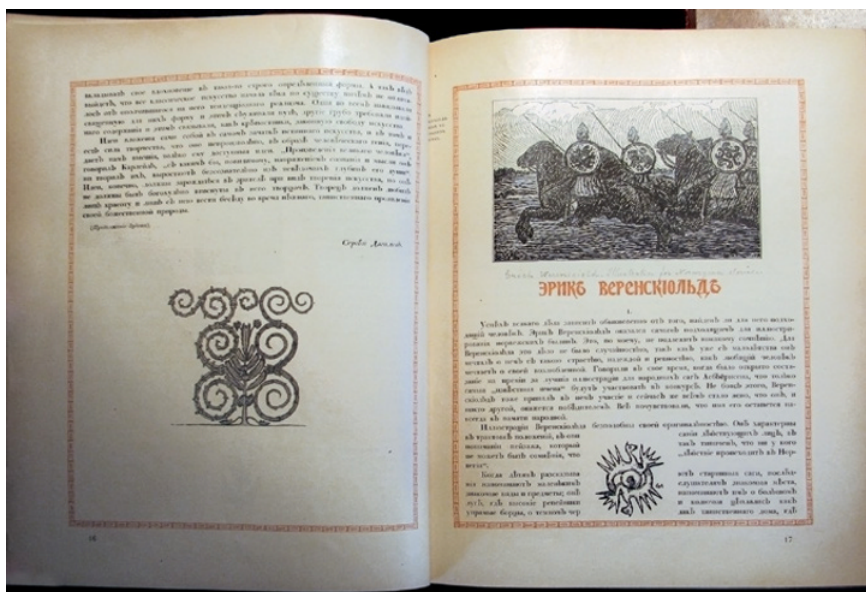


FIGURE 2.19 *The World of Art* (*Mir Iskusstva*), no. 1–2, 1899. Viktor Vasnetsov. *End piece* (on the left). Erik Werenskiöld. *Illustration for Norwegian legends and vignette* (on the right). COURTESY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS AT URBANA-CHAMPAIGN LIBRARY.

legendam”) without particular details (fig. 2.19). Diaghilev’s editorial manipulations went further than legitimate editorial license would permit; in point of fact adding his own piece of writing and using reproductions of different artworks than those that were described in the original text, he created a totally new interpretation of Madsen’s words.

A few months later in nos. 16–17, 1899, Diaghilev would publish the article “Illustrations for Pushkin” (“*Illiustratsii k Pushkinu*”),²⁰⁸ an important essay in terms of print culture, which would explain Diaghilev’s conception of text-image interrelation. In his article, Diaghilev justifies the total independence of image from text. He analyzes illustrations to Pushkin’s literary works that appeared in numerous editions celebrating the poet’s 100th anniversary. He states that the only meaning and significance of illustration lies in “total *subjectivity* [Diaghilev’s italics]; i.e. in the artist’s expression of his personal understanding of a certain

208 Sergei Diaghilev, “*Illiustratsii k Pushkinu*,” *Mir Iskusstva. Khudozhestvennaia khronika* 16–17 (1899): 35–38. See also the republication of this text in Zilbershtein and Samkov, *Sergei Diaghilev* vol. 1 95–99.

poem, story or novel”.²⁰⁹ Diaghilev considers that illustration needs “neither to replenish the literary work, nor merge (*slivat'sia*) with text; instead, its task is to shed light on the creativity of the poet through the *artist's* [Diaghilev's italics] keen individual understanding (*osveshchat' tvorchestvo poeta ostroindividual'nyy, iskluchitel'nyy vzgliadom khudozhnika*).”²¹⁰ Diaghilev's main statement here is: “the more unexpected the artist's interpretation of the poem and expression of his personality, the more important his work”. According to the critic, should the author see the visual interpretation of his work, he would exclaim, “there is *your* [i.e. the artist's; Diaghilev's italics] understanding of my work!” instead of “Yes, this is what *I* [Diaghilev's italics] meant here!”²¹¹

Diaghilev goes further making the statement that illustration should be absolutely independent from the literary work and announces that illustrations do exist in their own right.²¹² This statement echoes the French Symbolist theories of illustration and Stéphane Mallarmé's conception of “*double lecture*” in particular. As Juliet Simpson reports, for Mallarmé, the illustration was a “form of parallel text, which is complimentary to, rather than dependent on, the sources that inspire it”.²¹³ According to Simpson, this conception, besides increasing of importance of illustration, becomes a touchstone for the Symbolist notion of illustration of texts and serves as a form of “hybrid synthesis” or as a “new variation of the Symbolist *Gesamtkunstwerk* – in which categories of ‘literary’ and ‘pictorial’ are neither collapsed nor set in opposition, but are juxtaposed in dynamic and dialectical relation to one another”.²¹⁴ As will be shown in the next chapter, in *The Golden Fleece*, this dialectic would serve as a key to understanding the work of graphic designers.

Conclusion

Diaghilev's journal was a significant breakthrough in Russian periodical production in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The *World of Art* was modeled on contemporary avant-garde European art journals. The

²⁰⁹ Diaghilev, “Illiustratsii k Pushkinu” 96.

²¹⁰ Diaghilev, “Illiustratsii k Pushkinu” 96.

²¹¹ Diaghilev, “Illiustratsii k Pushkinu” 96.

²¹² Diaghilev, “Illiustratsii k Pushkinu” 96.

²¹³ Juliet Simpson, “Symbolist Illustration and Visual Metaphor: Remy de Gourmont's and Alfred Jarry's *L'Ymagier*,” *Word & Image* 21/2 (2005): 151.

²¹⁴ Simpson 151.

creators assigned primary importance to the journal's materiality, i.e. its appearance as an art object, hence the emphasis on the typography, quality of art reproduction, and graphic design.

The *World of Art* opposed itself to *Art and Art Industry*, the journal of the Wanderers. If the national revival in graphic design of *Art and Art Industry* represented the copying of ornaments and designs from Old Russian manuscripts, the *World of Art* presented a new vision. Korovin's "empty" cover page, the "national style" of Vasnetsov's flamboyant title and Somov's Rococo-revivalist vignette for Diaghilev's "Complex Questions" established the hybrid visual identity of the periodical. Evidence of "European" themes did appear in the reproduction of Vallotton, Puvis de Chavannes, Moreau, Beardsley and Burne-Jones.

In terms of word-image intermediality, the *World of Art* represented a complex structure in comparison to the more straightforward *Art and Art Industry*. The texts and art reproductions existed as if seemingly independent, i.e. the art reproductions often did not correspond to the meaning of the text and told a different story, emphasizing the principle of "individuality" established by Diaghilev, who was likely familiar with the Mallarméan theory of "parallel text".

The *World of Art* would become the benchmark for *The Golden Fleece* and *Apollo*. They would develop their own individuality, their own visual and ideological foundations; however, the understanding of the periodical as an art object, established by the *World of Art*, would be their bedrock.

The Golden Fleece or Russia's "Très Riches Heures"

This chapter is devoted to the successor to the *World of Art*, the Moscow art journal *The Golden Fleece* (*Zolotoe runo*, 1906–1909) and its inaugural issue. *The Golden Fleece*, the second major art periodical in late Imperial Russia, was launched by Nikolai Riabushinskii (1877–1951) in 1905 (Fig. 3.1).

As was already mentioned, *The Golden Fleece* became the art journal closely associated with the Russian Symbolist art movement. With regard to literary Symbolism, all the periodicals investigated in this volume published literary works of both the older and younger generations of Russian Symbolists; *Apollo* (discussed in the next chapter) would reflect the shift from Symbolism to Acmeism that happened in the 1910s.¹ Even though the *World of Art* published poetry and essays of Symbolist writers, was interested in Symbolist aesthetics and reproduced art works of main European Symbolists, the core of the *World of Art* artists never considered themselves a part of Symbolist movement and never fully belonged there. *The Golden Fleece* was the only journal that brought together Symbolist artists and writers.

Russian Symbolism in the visual arts was a controversial movement. Symbolist art was discussed by Symbolist writers associated with *The Golden Fleece*'s rival, the literary periodical *The Scales* (*Vesy*, 1904–1909), edited by the poet and theoretician Valerii Briusov, the co-founder of the publishing house "The Scorpion" ("Skorpion"), which united the Russian Symbolist poets and writers.² *The Scales* was intended to be a provider of Russian Symbolist art theory.³ This periodical focused on Symbolist literature and aesthetics, continuing the aesthetic program that had been started in 1892–3 by Dmitrii Merezhkovskii with the publication of his pivotal article, "About the Reasons for the Decline and the New Trends in Contemporary Russian Literature"

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- 1 Acmeism (from *acme* Greek, the highest point) was a trend in Russian poetry, which was started in 1910 by Nikolai Gumilev (1886–1921) and Sergei Gorodetskii (1884–1967). They opposed themselves to the Symbolists and their Dionysian mode and announced Apollonian clarity and harmony. If Symbolists employed symbols, Acmeists operated with exact images in their poetry. The term itself appeared in 1912.
 - 2 About Briusov in detail see: Bazanov; Joan Grossman, *Valery Bryusov and the Riddle of Russian Decadence* (Berkeley: U of California P, 1985); Ellis [Leo Kobylinskii], *Russkie simvolisty* (Letchworth: Bradda Books, 1972).
 - 3 See, for example, Maksimilian Voloshin's article "Tvorchestvo M. Iakunchikovoi" in *Vesy* 1 (1905), where Voloshin explains the difference between Symbolisms in literature and in art (p. 31).

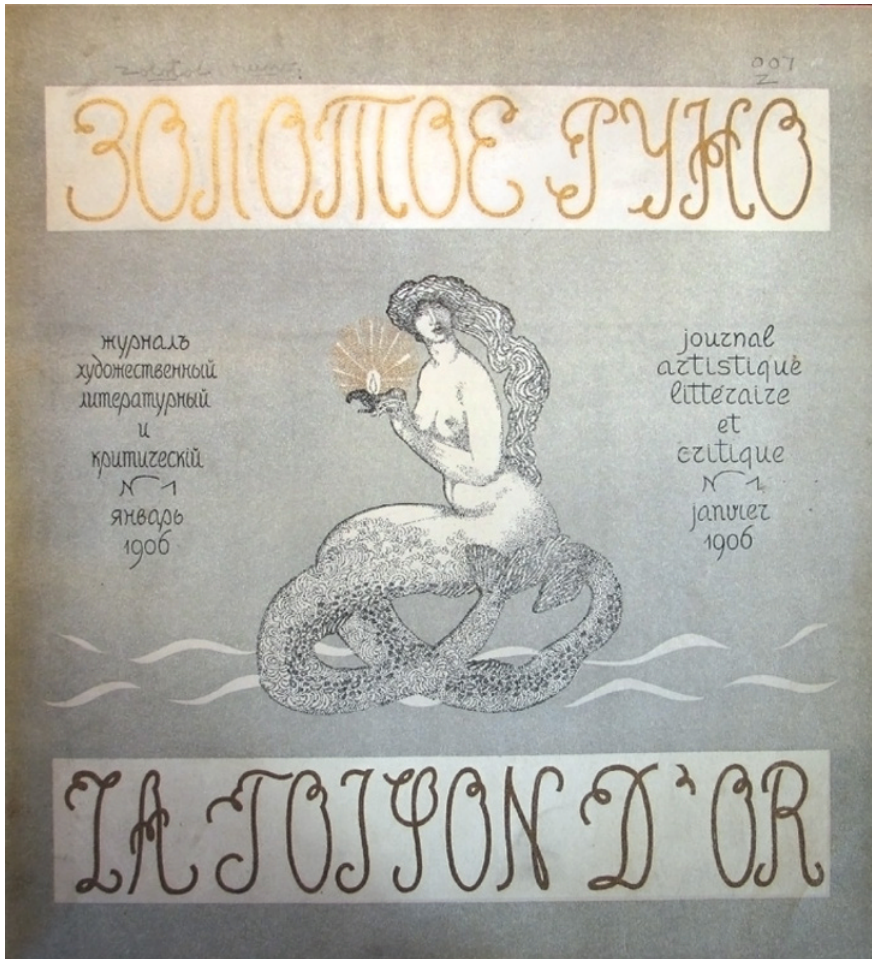


FIGURE 3.1 *I*** (Nikolai Feofilaktov – ?). Cover page of *The Golden Fleece* (Zolotoe runo), no. 1, 1906.

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(“O prichinakh upadka i novykh techeniiakh sovremennoi russkoi literatury”, 1893). Merezhkovskii’s work became the manifesto of the early literary Symbolists, in which he introduced the idea of the “symbol” to literature.⁴

4 See Dmitrii Merezhkovskii, “O prichinakh upadka i novykh techeniiakh sovremennoi russkoi literatury,” *L. Tolstoi i Dostoevskii. Vechnye sputniki* by Dmitrii Merezhkovskii (Moskva: Respublika, 1995) 552–560. Also see the review of Russian Symbolist theories in Irina Paperno, “The Meaning of Art: Symbolist Theories,” Irina Paperno and Joan D. Grossman, eds., *Creating Life. The Aesthetic Utopia of Russian Modernism* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1994) 13–23.

The Golden Fleece did not publish a manifesto for Symbolism in art, but what its first issue did feature was Aleksandr Blok's (1880–1921) "Colours and Words" ("Kraski i slova"),⁵ a seminal discussion of the close connection between art and literature. The Symbolist art group Blue Rose (*Golubaia roza*)⁶ – organized in 1907, following the eponymous exhibit – was closely associated with *The Golden Fleece*, but did not articulate any explicit theoretical program or vision either. As a group, they expressed their ideas visually employing a common set of pictorial symbols: obscure female figures, the dominance of blue and greenish colours, plant and floral motifs. They widely engaged the visual language of Art Nouveau but infused their works with new meanings. Irrationality, subjectivity, and dream-like objects were distinctive features of their art. The Blue Rose artists considered Mikhail Vrubel' and Viktor Borisov-Musatov (1870–1905) their main teachers. *The Golden Fleece* devoted its first two issues to both artists.⁷

The first two issues (no. 1 and 2) were published by Anatolii Mamontov's (Savva Mamontov's brother) printing house, while all later issues until the end of publication were printed by I.N. Kushnerev & Co press. Nikolai Riabushinskii performed the role of editor-in-chief. The journal ran for 48 issues, some of which were double or triple issues (i.e. nos. 11–12; nos. 7–8–9, etc.).

The Golden Fleece had the following sections: Art Section (*Khudozhestvennyi otdel*); Prose and Poetry (*Stikhi i belletristika*), which was closed in 1907; Art Criticism and Critical-Philosophical Articles (*Khudozhestvennaia kritika i stat'i kritiko-filosofskogo sodержaniia*), also dropped in 1907; the Art Chronicle (*Khudozhestvennaia khronika*); and the Critical-Bibliographical Section (*Kritiko-bibliograficheskii otdel*); the latter was cancelled beginning with the second issue of 1907. Only in issue number seven, 1907, was the reader introduced to the Literary Section (*Literaturnyi otdel*), which combined both criticism and literature. In the last year of publishing, only two sections existed in the journal: the Art Section and the Literary Section.⁸

5 Aleksandr Blok, "Kraski i slova," *Zolotoe runo* 1 (1906). Its discussion follows.

6 The group included the artists Anatolii Arapov (1876–1949), Petr Bromirskii (1886–1920), Vladimir Drittenpreis (1878–1916), Ivan Knabe (1879–1910), Nikolai Krymov (1884–1958), Pavel Kuznetsov (1878–1968), Vasilii Milioti (1875–1943), Nikolai Milioti (1874–1962), Nikolai Sapunov (1880–1912), Martiros Sar'ian (1880–1972), Sergei Sudeikin (1882–1946), Petr Utkin (1877–1934), Nikolai Feofilaktov (1876–1941), and Artur Fonvizin (1883–1973).

7 For more details on Symbolism and The Blue Rose, see John Bowl, "The Blue Rose: Russian Symbolism in Art," *The Burlington Magazine* 118/881 (Aug 1976): 566–575; John Bowl, "Symbolism and Modernity in Russia," *Artforum* 16.3 (1977): 40–45; Alla Rusakova, *Simvolizm v russkoi zhivopisi* (Moskva: Iskusstvo, 1995); Ida Gofman, *Golubaia roza* (Moskva: Pinakoteka, 2000).

8 Vladimir Shadurskii, comp., *Zolotoe runo. Khudozhestvennyi, literaturnyi i kriticheskii zhurnal (1906–1909)*, ed. N.A. Bogomolov (Velikii Novgorod: Novgorodskii universitet im. Iaroslava Mudrogo, 2002) 6.

The Golden Fleece was the most luxurious Russian art periodical ever produced. The sumptuous look and book craftsmanship can be compared with Western European medieval illuminated manuscripts commissioned by the wealthy nobility, as was the richly illuminated *Très Riches Heures* manuscript of the Duke de Berry from circa 1410. It seems unlikely that the son of the rich merchant Riabushinskii family ever saw illuminated manuscripts, but he did employ similar “strategies” to express his taste. To emphasize the wealth of the manuscript owner, fifteenth-century artists used ultramarine, the most expensive blue pigment made from crushed lapis lazuli, which cost more than gold. Instead of using ultramarine, the editor-in-chief of *The Golden Fleece* published the periodical on expensive imported enameled and silk paper, printed the highest quality reproductions, delivered the periodical to subscribers in a case with a gilded cord, organized chic banquets at the editorial office, and for a time published all texts in Russian and French. No expense was spared.

The Golden Fleece in Scholarship

In comparison to the *World of Art* (the group and the journal), *The Golden Fleece* has been less studied. Significant interest in the journal arose only in the 1980s. The first publication (1984) was Aleksandr Lavrov’s chapter on *The Golden Fleece*, published in an anthology devoted to the Russian periodicals of the early twentieth century.⁹ Lavrov’s chapter is a historical survey of the journal’s emergence and development with an emphasis on literature and the writers associated with it. The scholar identified the main conflicts of *The Golden Fleece* with its opponents as well as internal strife. William Richardson’s monograph *Zolotoe Runo and Russian Modernism: 1905–1910*, published in 1986,¹⁰ remains the most comprehensive study of the periodical. Richardson wrote a detailed historico-cultural analysis, focusing on the journal’s organization and appearance, its editorial conflicts and polemics with *The Scales*; he further discussed its literary content and exhibits.

In the 1990s and early 2000s, the periodical again attracted interest. Vladimir Shadurskii published the full table of contents of *The Golden Fleece* in 2002.¹¹

9 A.V. Lavrov, “Zolotoe runo,” *Russkaia literatura i zhurnalistika nachala XX veka. 1905–1917. Burzhuazno-liberal’nye i modernistskie izdaniia*, ed. B.A. Bialik (Moskva: Nauka, 1984) 137–173.

10 William Richardson, *Zolotoe Runo and Russian Modernism: 1905–1910* (Ann Arbor: Ardis Publishers, 1986).

11 Vladimir Shadurskii, *Zolotoe runo. Khudozhestvennyi, literaturnyi i kriticheskii zhurnal (1906–1909)*, ed. N.A. Bogomolov (Velikii Novgorod: Novgorodskii universitet im. Iaroslava Mudrogo, 2002).

Another valuable contribution was made by Nikolai Bogomolov and Lavrov, who published the correspondence between the main journal members,¹² which shed light on the relations between the members of the editorial board. Biographical articles by John Bowlt¹³ and Nataliia Dumova¹⁴ devoted to Nikolai Riabushinskii mention *The Golden Fleece* and contain important information about the journal and its history. Several publications devoted to the Symbolist art association Blue Rose, which also include some references to *The Golden Fleece*, were published in the last few decades. They provide important details about the aesthetics of Russian Symbolist art and its reflection in *The Golden Fleece*.¹⁵

There are several recent works that attempt to survey the art and graphic design associated with the journal. These include Ida Gofman's richly printed edition with excellent facsimile reproductions from the journal,¹⁶ as well as Gofman's article.¹⁷ Janet Kennedy's¹⁸ and Mikhail Kiselev's¹⁹ survey articles devoted to the graphic design of Russian art periodicals consider the main concepts of design in *The Golden Fleece*. The above mentioned works, however, do not discuss *The Golden Fleece* as an art object, its high quality art reproductions, exquisite graphic design and word-image intermediality. This chapter will focus on *The Golden Fleece's* inaugural issue, its paratextual message and its materiality in a historico-cultural context.

- 12 Nikolai Bogomolov, "K istorii 'Zolotogo runa,'" *Ot Pushkina do Kibirova. Stat'i o russkoi literature, preimushchestvenno o poezii* by N.A. Bogomolov (Moskva: Novoe literaturnoe obozrenie, 2004) 41–83.
- 13 John Bowlt, "Nikolai Ryabushinsky: Playboy of the Eastern World," *Apollo* 142.98 (1973): 486–493.
- 14 N. Dumova, "Nikolai Riabushinskii: 'Zolotoe runo' i 'Golubaia roza,'" *Kentavr* Jan (1992): 83–95.
- 15 See Bowlt, "The Blue Rose: Russian Symbolism in Art," 566–575; Bowlt, "Symbolism and Modernity in Russia" 40–45; Anatolii Strigalev, "...Tam rozy golubye," *Pinakoteka* 3 (1997): 4–17; Tat'iana Kochemasova, "Grafika khudozhnikov 'Goluboi rozy,'" *Zhurnal Moskovskogo muzeia sovremennogo iskusstva* 3 (2007); Iu. Gerchuk, "'Saratovskaia shkola' i puti russkoi grafiki xx veka," *V.E. Borisov-Musatov i "Saratovskaia shkola"*, ed. T.V. Grodskova (Saratov: Saratovskii gosudarstvennyi khudozhestvennyi muzei, 2000) 42–52; Gofman, *Golubaia roza*; Rusakova.
- 16 Ida Gofman, *Zolotoe runo. Zhurnal, vystavki: 1906–1909* (Moskva: Russkii raritet, 2007). According to Bogomolov's review, the book contains some misinterpretations and factual errors. See the book review by N.A. Bogomolov, *Naudachnyi spektakl!*, *Novoe literaturnoe obozrenie* 95 (2009) 1 Feb, 2011. <<http://magazines.russ.ru/nlo/2009/95/bo29-pr.html>>.
- 17 Ida Gofman, "'Zolotoe runo' 1906–1909. U istokov russkogo avangarda," *Nashe Nasledie* 87 (2008) April, 2009. <<http://nasledie-rus.ru/podshivka/87u.php>>.
- 18 Kennedy, "The World of Art and Other Turn-of-the-Century Russian Art Journals" 63–78.
- 19 Kiselev, "Graphic Design" 50–67.

The Golden Fleece: The Art-Historical Context

The Russian Art Periodical Press after the World of Art

The development of Russian art journalism did not stop with the closing of the *World of Art* in 1904. However, there were no journals comparable to the *World of Art* in terms of reporting on the contemporary situation in art. *The Artistic Treasures of Russia* (*Khudozhestvennye sokrovishcha Rossii*, 1901–1908), a journal devoted to reproducing historical art works from private and public collections, edited by Alexandre Benois from 1901 to 1903 and thereafter by Adrian Prakhov, was published by the Society for Encouragement of the Arts.²⁰ This periodical, however, did not explore contemporary art and aesthetic questions; rather, it was devoted to the popularization of Russian and European art heritage from earlier periods and was addressed to art collectors and lovers of antiquity (Fig. 3.2). After the last issue of the *World of Art* came out in 1905, the vacuum in publishing on contemporary art themes was not immediately filled; therefore the Russian art community became concerned with this situation.

Thus, Igor Grabar', artist and art critic, one of the participants of the *World of Art* group, had been thinking about publishing a new art periodical.²¹ He wrote to Benois in August 1905, saying that "after the 'death' of the *World of Art*, its legacy was split into three parts. Philosophy became an issue for *The Questions of Life* (*Voprosy zhizni*), and literature became the main concern of *The Scales*. Visual arts need a third journal".²² This "third journal", straightforwardly entitled *Art* (*Iskusstvo*), appeared in Moscow in 1905. Edited by the art critic Nikolai Tarovaty (1876–1906), it published eight issues and ended in the same year. Tarovaty aimed to create an art periodical comparable to the *World of Art*²³ in terms of coverage of art criticism and the quality of its reproductions. In the beginning, the journal was devoted exclusively to visual art, both historical and contemporary; literature appeared only in its last issue.²⁴ Although this Moscow monthly promised to become a new vanguard art periodical, this did not happen due to financial difficulties that resulted in its closure. *Art*, with its editorial board, became the foundation for establishing *The Golden Fleece*, financed by Riabushinskii, who invited Tarovaty to edit his new

20 Severiukhin and Leikind, *Zolotoe vek* 181.

21 In 1905, Benois wrote in his diary that he received a letter from Grabar', where the latter discussed a journal he was conceiving Aleksandr Benua, "Dnevnik 1905 goda," ed. I.I. Vydrin, I.P. Lapina, and G.A. Marushina *Nashe nasledie* 57 (2001): 75.

22 See note 299 to Benua, "Dnevnik 1905 goda" 75.

23 Kiselev 59.

24 Lavrov, "Zolotoe runo" 138.

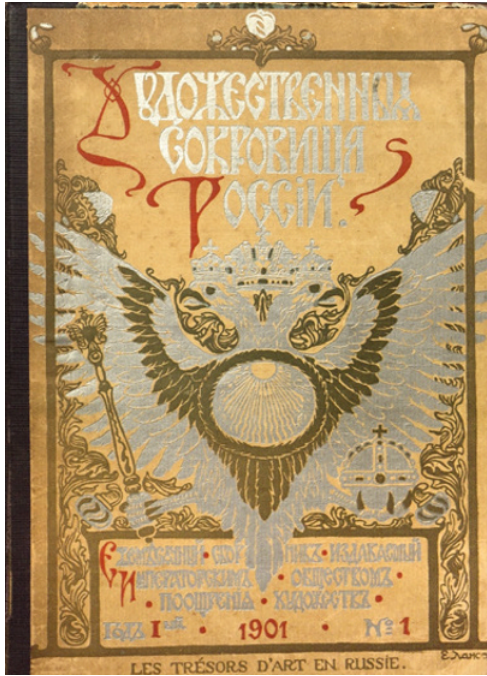


FIGURE 3.2

*Eugene Lanceray. Cover page
for Art Treasures of Russia
(Khudozhestvennye sokrovischa
Rossii), no. 1, 1901.*

COURTESY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF
ILLINOIS AT URBANA-CHAMPAIGN
LIBRARY.

art periodical. It seemed initially that *The Golden Fleece* would be a continuation of *Art* in several ways: Tarovaty and Sergei Sokolov (pseudonym of Sergei Krechetov, 1878–1936), the main editors of *Art*, moved to *The Golden Fleece* aiming to continue the aesthetic program started by *Art*.²⁵ In reality, it became a completely different journal that survived for four years until it closed due to Riabushinskii's bankruptcy.²⁶

Nikolai Riabushinskii: Publisher, Editor-in-chief and Art Patron

Many scholars, who otherwise express contradictory views on Riabushinskii, have discussed the significance of his personality and his cultural impact.

25 Lavrov, "Zolotoe runo" 139.

26 Richardson, *Zolotoe runo* 172. In September 1908, Riabushinskii attempted suicide. The newspaper *Speech (Rech')* reported on September 11 (24), 1908: "Using the revolver Browning, Riabushinskii shot himself into his chest. The bullet went through his body, but caught the lung. The doctors are hoping that his life will be saved". Qtd. in N.A. Bogomolov and S.V. Shumikhina (eds. and comps.), *M. Kuzmin. Dnevnik 1908–1915* (Sankt-Peterburg: Izdatel'stvo Ivana Limbakha) 606. Many reasons for this attempt have been suggested, from bankruptcy to unrequited love. As a result, for a long time after that he was sick and eventually lost his acute interest in the periodical (Lavrov, "Zolotoe runo" 172–173).

Some scholars elevate him to the level of Sergei Diaghilev, while others consider him just a moneybag and mediocre dabbler. For example, in her recent article, Gofman categorically claims that Riabushinskii's impact on the development of Russian art was of the same scale and significance as Diaghilev's, and perhaps even greater,²⁷ while another Russian scholar, Bogomolov, believes that recent attention paid to Riabushinskii is only the result of the interest in the Riabushinskii merchant dynasty.²⁸ Bogomolov bases his criticism on correspondence related to *The Golden Fleece*, its publishing and editing, especially those letters that illustrate the numerous conflicts among members of the editorial board.²⁹

Negative views of Riabushinskii's intellectual abilities are expressed in one of the earliest (1984) works devoted to *The Golden Fleece*; there, Lavrov states that the contemporaries called him a "cad" or "parvenu".³⁰ Lavrov, however, provides only opinions expressed primarily by the *World of Art* participants (Benois,³¹ Eugeny Lanceray, Konstantin Somov, Dmitrii Filosofov, and Lev

27 Gofman, "'Zolotoe runo' 1906–1909. U istokov russkogo avangarda".

28 Bogomolov, "K istorii 'Zolotogo runa'" 41.

29 For example, see the full text of the official letter of Sokolov, who left the periodical after a half of a year of its publishing. In his letter, Sokolov states that Riabushinskii's lack of education cannot be substituted by his love of art. He mentions Riabushinskii's despotism and authoritarianism (*grubyi avtoritet denezhnoi sily*) (See Bogomolov, "K istorii 'Zolotogo runa'" 42–45).

30 Lavrov, "Zolotoe runo" 141–142.

31 See for example, Benois's opinion about Riabushinskii: "He was considered a fabulously rich man; he led the young Moscow artists. In his villa 'The Black Swan', he organized some kind of wonderful feasts, a sort of 'Athenian nights' [orgies]. At the same villa, he had wild animals running free, that scared his neighbours. Occasionally Riabushinskii wrote literary pieces, but did not reveal them to the public and created very mediocre art works in Symbolist or, as it was called in those days, in a decadent style" (Benua, *Moi vospominaniia*, vol. 2, 439). In 1906, in his letter to Somov about *The Golden Fleece* launch, Benois was much more abrupt in expressing his opinion: "Let Riabushinskii be! Let the kingdom of Russian Moscow boorishness rule. It serves us right, that means that all of us cost a pin, if this golden calf came and all of us gave up and began to flatter him. Everybody and even the best of the best – Merezhkovskii, Dima [Filosofov], etc. Bal'mont sent me a note that I do not have to judge from the first impression and "He" is better than seems to be. ...You will ask me, what should we do? I think, nothing. We will contribute to 'The Golden Crap' and dance around the golden calf. We will exhibit in Paris in Riabushinskii's brothel..." See the letter of A. Benois to K. Somov, Versailles, March 9, 1906 in Iu.N. Podkopaeva and A.N. Sveshnikova, eds. and comps., *Konstantin Andreevich Somov. Pis'ma. Dnevnik. Suzhdeniia soveremennikov* (Moskva: Iskusstvo, 1979) 450–452. While the majority of the World of Art artists accepted Riabushinskii without piety, Bakst, according to

Shestov), whose prejudices might be explained by the fact that they could not even imagine the emergence of a luxurious "continuation" of the *World of Art*, with its obvious emphasis on print revival and periodical craftsmanship, in Moscow, at a time when St Petersburg's artistic elite and writers did not have a journal to compete with either *The Golden Fleece* or *The Scales*.

The negative judgments of Riabushinskii's personality were, indeed, legitimate in many ways. As the publisher and the editor-in-chief, Riabushinskii did not have a clear program for his periodical; he relied on Sokolov (Krechetov) who considered himself a theorist of *The Golden Fleece* during its first year, and who was responsible for its appearance and who, likely, wrote the manifesto.³² Riabushinskii's education was limited: he completed only private gymnasium and secondary school (*real'noe uchilishche*) in Moscow.³³ He had no university degree and would not have been considered an equal in the eyes of the refined and educated contributors of his journal.

After graduation, the rebellious progeny of an Old-Believer merchant family did not behave according to his family expectations and wasted his inherited money. His powerful brothers assigned Riabushinskii a guardian to prevent him from squandering the family fortune. During this period of custody, he travelled to Japan, China, India, New Guinea and Western Europe. After his return in 1905, Riabushinskii sold his share of the family business to his brothers and invested all his money in the publication of *The Golden Fleece*.³⁴ In producing the art periodical he tried to proclaim his dandyism, his elegant taste and refined artistic nature, which would give him admission to the circles of the cultural elite.

Indeed, Riabushinskii desired the same status Diaghilev held on the Olympus of Russian art. He admired Diaghilev's enterprises and to a certain extent copied him,³⁵ but never surpassed him. Riabushinskii concentrated on producing art exhibits of Russian Symbolists associated with *The Golden Fleece*, in which he participated as an artist.³⁶ In the *World of Art*, the publishers and

Benois, "rejoiced" of the fact that Riabushinskii, not Grabar', was the editor of the major Russian art journal of the day (Podkopaeva and Sveshnikova 450–452).

32 Lavrov "Zolotoe runo" 143. Discussion of the editorial statement follows below.

33 Iu. Petrov, *Dinastiia Riabushinskikh* (Moskva: Russkaia kniga, 1997) 143–145.

34 Iu. Petrov 143–145.

35 Benois noted sarcastically that Riabushinskii was a perfected edition of Diaghilev (Letter of A. Benois to K. Somov, Versailles, March 9, 1906 in Podkopaeva and Sveshnikova 450).

36 Riabushinskii exhibited his works from 1908 through 1919 in Russia. Later, after emigration from Russia, Riabushinskii organized his personal exhibits in Paris in 1926 and in 1933. The introduction article to his first personal exhibit catalogue was written by Kees van Dongen, one of the founders of the Fauvist movement (Gofman, *Golubaia roza* 269).

sponsors (Savva Mamontov, Mariia Tenisheva³⁷ and eventually Nicholas II) never participated directly in the periodical (e.g., in writing articles or contributing to the journal's design). In the case of Riabushinskii, he directly influenced the physical look of the periodical, contributing to the paratextual message of the first issue and working as an illustrator of the poetry and designing the title page to the Art Section.

Diaghilev organized various exhibits (many more than Riabushinskii), but he never exhibited as an artist; although a talented singer, Diaghilev nonetheless never participated in his Russian Seasons as a singer or musician. Diaghilev was a renowned art critic, who published his art reviews in the press extensively and participated in his brainchild, the *World of Art*, as a critic. Riabushinskii performed as an art critic only occasionally;³⁸ his writings, however, did not make an impact on contemporary aesthetic views.

Riabushinskii's friend, Prince Sergei Shcherbatov (1875–1962), and probably many of his contemporaries, believed that Riabushinskii only “played the role of an ‘aesthete’”, acknowledging, however, that he was a gifted person who expressed his artistic aptitude through the organization of extravagant shows and gatherings; his luxurious lifestyle was “oriented toward beauty” (*s orientatsiei na krasotu*).³⁹ *The Golden Fleece* publication, his organization of extravagant exhibits, his exclusive Modernist mansion “The Black Swan” (“*Chernyi lebed*”), built in 1908–09, partially burned in 1913) were all the realizations of Riabushinskii's artistic nature. He did not have any art education but was enthusiastic about art collecting and organizing and sponsoring art shows where he exhibited his own works, which were strongly criticized by critics for their dilettantism.⁴⁰

One of the highest accomplishments of Riabushinskii was his financial support of the already mentioned Russian Symbolist art association, the Blue Rose. The Blue Rose artists exhibited first at the Crimson Rose (*Alaia roza*) art show, which they organized in 1904 in the provincial town of Saratov. Beginning in 1904, the group participated in *The Scales*, where the artists of the group contributed as graphic designers. In 1906, Diaghilev showed their art in Paris, Berlin and Venice. In 1907–09 in Moscow, Riabushinskii and *The*

37 Tenisheva was eager to participate in the *World of Art* as a contributor, but was never allowed.

38 See for example his article in *The Golden Fleece*: N. Shinskii [Riabushinskii], “Iskusstvo, ego druz'ia i vragi,” *Zolotoe runo* 7–8 (1908): 120–123.

39 Sergei Shcherbatov, *Khudozhnik v ushedshei Rossii* (Moskva: XXI-Soglasie, 2000) 48.

40 D. Severiukhin and O. Leikind, *Khudozhniki russkoi emigratsii 1917–1941* (Peterburg: Izdatel'stvo Chernysheva, 1994) 405.

Golden Fleece organized five exhibits: "The Blue Rose" in March–April 1907 (the title of the exhibit later would become adopted by the group), "Garland-Stefanos" (*Venok-Stefanos*) in August 1907–January 1908, "Salon of *The Golden Fleece*" (*Salon Zolotogo runa*) in April 1908, and two exhibits of the "Golden Fleece" in January–February 1909 and January–February 1910 respectively.⁴¹ As with all of Riabushinskii's endeavors, his exhibits were exclusive presentations with an emphasis on luxury. The rooms were decorated with crimped paper, the walls were draped with fabric and the floors were carpeted with broadcloth – all colour coordinated. Flowerpots with lilies and hyacinths with strong scents were placed everywhere, and the foremost Symbolist authors, Andrei Belyi, Briusov and Aleksei Remizov (1877–1957) recited their works.⁴²

Nonetheless, Riabushinskii did not become the second Diaghilev in Russian culture. *The Golden Fleece* was a financial fiasco, but a publishing victory: today it is essential to acknowledge that he made a significant impact on periodical culture, creating a journal that became an art object and one of the highest achievements of Russian print culture. His ambition and self-made pseudo-dandyism helped to create a journal that, despite the skepticism of his contemporaries, became one of the jewels of book craftsmanship in late Imperial Russia.

Main Contributors

It should be mentioned at this point that *The Golden Fleece*, the sumptuous Moscow periodical, lacked a coherent group identity within the editorial team. The editorial board primarily fulfilled Riabushinskii's orders. In fact, the members of the editorial board of *The Golden Fleece* had quite a complicated relationship with the publisher.

Despite his lack of education, Riabushinskii was able to engage the foremost artists and writers to participate in his journal. The contributors to the Art Section (*Khudozhestvennyi otdel*) included: Benois, Bakst, Vrubel', Modest Durnov (1868–1928), Mstislav Dobuzhinskii, Pavel Kuznetsov (1878–1968), Konstantin Korovin, Elizaveta Kruglikova (1865–1941), Lanceray, Nikolai Rerikh, Margarita Sabashnikova (1882–1973), Nikolai Sapunov (1880–1912), Valentin Serov, Konstantin Somov and Nikolai Feofilaktov (1878–1941).⁴³ The art section editor was Tarovaty, the former editor of *Art* and allegedly Riabushinskii's artistic mentor. Tarovaty served as the editor of *The Golden*

⁴¹ Strigalev 11.

⁴² Strigalev 15–16.

⁴³ See the section "Announcements" in *Zolotoe Runo* 1 (1906): 158.

Fleece for less than a year, and after his unexpected death in October 1906, his position was taken by Riabushinskii's friend (and follower of Symbolism) Vasilii Milioti (1875–1943), who would become a member of The Blue Rose association.⁴⁴

The Prose and Poetry section (*Stikhi i belletristika*) was edited by Sokolov (Krechetov), director of the publishing house “Gryphon” (“Grif”).⁴⁵ It is known that Sokolov and Riabushinskii expressed mutual dissatisfaction with each other, and Sokolov left amid a scandal after Tarovaty's death.⁴⁶ Aleksandr Kursinskii (1873–1919), the Symbolist poet and translator of Oscar Wilde and Charles Baudelaire, accepted the position of editor of the literary department after Sokolov. He, however, also left the journal after the Prose and Poetry section was closed in 1907. The closure of this section was the result of a major conflict between *The Golden Fleece* and the Symbolist poets and writers from *The Scales*, who participated in both periodicals.⁴⁷ As mentioned, in the issue number seven, 1907, the reader was introduced to the Literary Section (*Literaturnyi otdel*), which combined both criticism and literature. The editorial manager of this section was Aleksandr Blok.⁴⁸

In the last year of publishing (1909), only the Art Section and the Literary Section remained.⁴⁹ Due to the shortage of money and financial losses, *The Golden Fleece* was gradually losing its original “finish” not only in terms of its appearance and material qualities, but also with respect to content.

The Bilingual Presentation of Russian Cosmopolitanism

The Golden Fleece proclaimed itself a bilingual periodical. Riabushinskii, who spoke neither French nor any other foreign language,⁵⁰ was interested in

44 Richardson, *Zolotoe runo* 42–43.

45 Vladislav Khodasevich considered Krechetov a good organizer but a weak and dilettante poet, who lacked good education. See published in the newspaper *Vozrozhdenie*, Paris, May 28, 1936 obituary: Vladislav Khodasevich, “Pamiati Sergeia Krechetova,” *Sozvezdie Bliznetsov. Literatura i zhizn'* 3 March, 2011 <http://dugward.ru/library/hodasevich/hodasevich_pamyati_sergeya_krechetova.html>.

46 See the complete text of Sokolov's scandalous letter to Riabushinskii in Bogomolov, “K istorii ‘Zolotogo runa,’” 42–45. After his departure, Sokolov began to avenge Riabushinskii intending to force Riabushinskii to close the periodical. See the details in N. Bogomolov, “Simvolistskaia Moskva glazami frantszskogo poeta,” *Nashe nasledie* 70 (2004) 4 Feb., 2011 <<http://www.nasledie-rus.ru/podshivka/70n.php>>.

47 Bazanov 414; Richardson, *Zolotoe runo* 83–101.

48 Bazanov 695.

49 Shadurskii 6.

50 Bogomolov, “Simvolistskaia Moskva”.

marketing his product abroad. According to Lanceray, Riabushinskii anticipated a wonderful future for his periodical and exclaimed: "My journal will be everywhere – in Japan, America, and Europe".⁵¹

Thus, readers had an opportunity to subscribe to the periodical – titled *La Toison d'Or* in French – in Paris, Berlin, Leipzig, Charlottenburg, London, Vienna, Rome, Madrid, Copenhagen, Constantinople and New York.⁵² Indeed, Riabushinskii was inspired by Diaghilev in his ultimate desire to promote Russian art in France and European art in Russia. Diaghilev's *World of Art* had been available and had readers abroad (Rainer Maria Rilke, for example, read the periodical in Russian at Cassirer's salon⁵³) and influenced the European art world. Riabushinskii was sensitive to the cosmopolitan mood among the Russian cultural elite and recognized the desirability of publishing a bilingual art journal.

One of the most important members of the editorial board, who ran the French part of the journal, was a close friend of Riabushinskii, Genrikh Tasteven (d. 1916), a Muscovite of French origin.⁵⁴ He published his articles under the pseudonym Empiricist (*Empirik*) and was responsible for the translation of prose into French. In the first issues, the poetry was not translated because a translator was not found.⁵⁵ Later Riabushinskii engaged a young French poet, Alexandre Mercereau, (1884–1945?) to translate Russian poetry into French. Mercereau wrote in Russia and translated under the pseudonym Eshmer Valdor. His translations, however, were published in only a few issues.

It is worth noting here that the very first art periodical (as mentioned in the Chapter 1), *The Journal of Fine Arts* (*Zhurnal iziashchnykh iskusstv*), published in Russia in 1807 by Johann Gottlieb Buhle (1763–1821), a professor at Moscow University, was a bilingual edition issued in Russian and German. Some translations into French occurred in the *World of Art* (e.g. tables of contents were published in both Russian and French), and somewhat later the editorial board transliterated the artists' names into French.

The Russian-French bilingualism contributed to appearance of a bilingual publication. The Russian cultural elite and aristocracy were fluent in French, as learning European languages was a mark of noble pedigree. French had been

51 This quote appeared in Lanceray's letter to Benois from January 5, 1905. (See note 8, in Podkopaeva and Sveshnikova 596).

52 "Ob"iavleniia," *Zolotoe runo* 1 (1906) N.p.

53 A. Demskaiia and N. Semenova, eds. and comps., *P.D. Ettinger. Stat'i. Iz perepiski. Vospominaniia sovremennikov* (Moskva: Sovetskii khudozhnik, 1989) 70.

54 Bogomolov, "Simvolistskaia Moskva".

55 Richardson, *Zolotoe runo* 38.

the main language used by the nobility in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Francophilia subsided after the Napoleonic wars, but never become extinct.

Moreover, *The Golden Fleece* was conceived in the cultural context of a Russian-French cultural engagement and epitomized the new step of marketing and propagating Russian art abroad. As Debora Silverman mentions in her study of Art Nouveau in fin-de-siècle France, the Franco-Russian alliance, ratified between 1891 and 1897 and valid until 1917, stimulated rich cultural exchange and mutual cultural appreciation.⁵⁶ The idea of a Russian-French rapprochement was highlighted in the Russian press extensively before the actual treaty was ratified. Major Russian newspapers, such as *The Stock Bulletin* (*Birzhevyye vedomosti*), *Moscow Bulletin* (*Moskovskie vedomosti*) and *The New Times* (*Novoe vremia*), propagated a pro-French attitude among the Russians. Russia was becoming more and more popular in France and France even more popular in Russia. In 1896, Russian tsar Nicholas II and tsarina Aleksandra Fedorovna visited France, and the President of France Félix François Faure came on a return state visit to St Petersburg and Peterhof in 1897.⁵⁷ Celebrating the alliance, Russia and France invoked their common history, when the first Franco-Russian coalition was ratified, i.e., the union of Louis XIV and Peter the Great, and the establishment of the first French Embassy in the Russian Empire in 1717.

Artistic partnerships between Russia and France began with Baron Pichon's collaboration with Russian art scholars; Russian and French artists participated in the Parisian salons during the 1880s.⁵⁸ From April to October 1891, the French Exhibition, with displays from the Paris World Exhibit of 1889, was held in Moscow.⁵⁹ Moreover, Russian-French cultural rapprochement triggered a series of cultural exchanges, including the *Salon d'Automne* Russian Exhibit of 1906 organized by Benois and Diaghilev.⁶⁰

56 Debora Silverman, *Art Nouveau in Fin-de-Siècle France. Politics, Psychology, and Style* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, & London: University of California Press, 1989) 159–171.

57 I.S. Rybachenok, *Rossiiā i Frantsiia: soiuz interesov i soiuz serdets, 1891–1897* (Moskva: Rosspen, 2004) 12.

58 Silverman 159–71.

59 Aleksandr Belianovskii, "Soiuz serdets...Frantsuzskaia vystavka v Moskve 1891 goda," *Ekspo vedomosti* 1 (2007) 20 Oct., 2008 <<http://expo.mostpp.ru/pages.php?name=history-25>>.

60 See the details about the French in St Petersburg and Russian-French political, economic, and cultural relations in the eighteenth-nineteenth centuries in the exhibit catalogue supported by the collection of articles in E.N. Petrova, ed., *Frantsuzy v Peterburge. Katalog vystavki* (St. Petersburg, Gosudarstvennyi Russkii Muzei i Posol'stvo Frantsii v Rossii: Palace Editions, 2003).

In practice bilingualism of *The Golden Fleece* was achieved with printing the same text in two languages on the same page. Every page of the journal, including the table of contents, was divided into two symmetrical columns with a decorative vertical divider designed by Dobuzhinskii (Fig. 3.3), which visually corresponded to his free pen-and-ink drawing for the table of contents

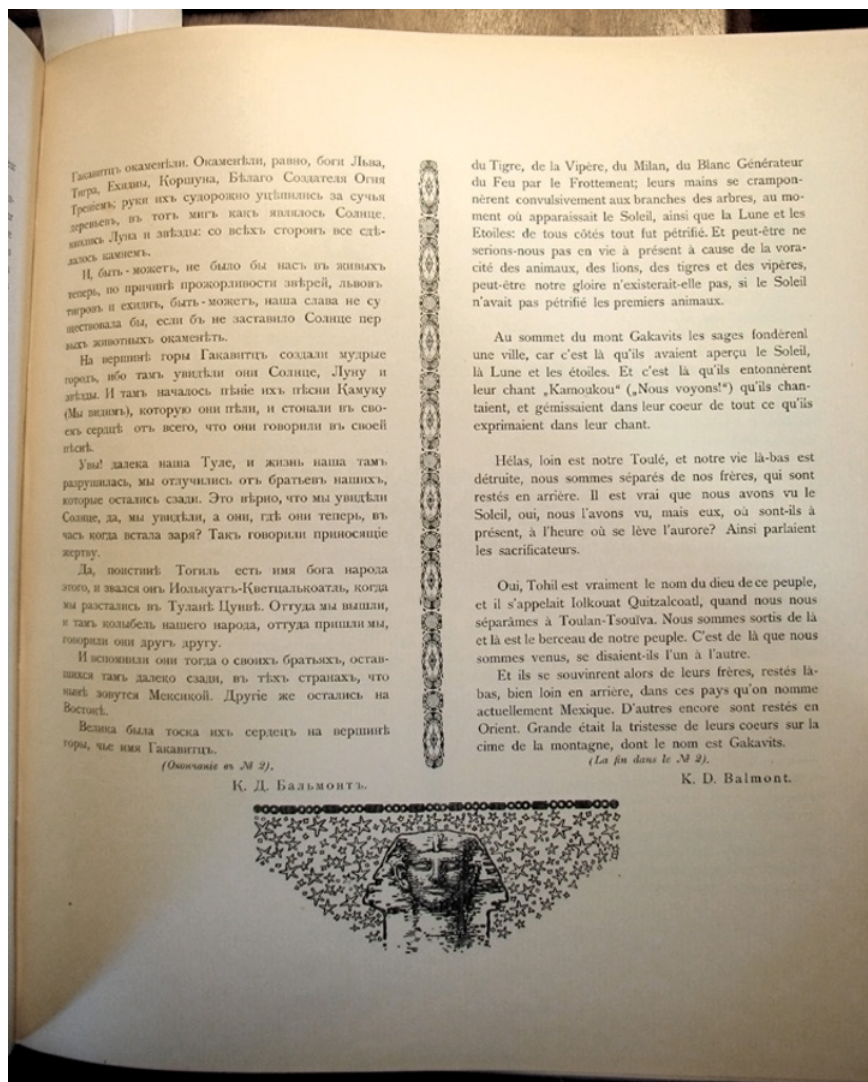


FIGURE 3.3 Page with Russian and French text in *The Golden Fleece* (Zolotoe runo), no. 1, 1906, with Mstislav Dobuzhinskii's dividing rule and Eugene Lanceray's end piece for Konstantin Bal'mont's "The Creation Story of Maya" ("Chelovecheskaia povest' kvichei-maiev"). COURTESY OF THE FRICK ART REFERENCE LIBRARY.

(discussion follows). The French translation on the right was intended to coincide with the original Russian text not just in meaning but also in length in order to maintain a symmetrical layout of the page. This significantly restricted the translator's possibilities to create a high quality literary translation. Briusov, for example, was concerned with this bilingualism and expressed his dissatisfaction, believing that it was too complicated to find translators who would, month after month, provide the reader with quality translations of such difficult authors as Bal'mont, Belyi, Sologub, Gippius and others.⁶¹

Publishing the periodical in two languages created various difficulties. The Russian typesetters were not able to read Latin characters; translations required extra time and therefore the translators often did not meet deadlines.⁶² Due to these technical problems and insufficient interest in the Russian art periodical in France, the French part was dropped from issue no. 6, 1906. Riabushinskii's financial losses caused a reduction in the number of pages in the periodical, also played a role. The editor-in-chief would write in despair to Merezhkovskii from Paris in the summer of 1906: "I stayed in France for awhile and now I am certain that today the French translation is of little interest to the French, and keeping the translations in the journal brings me incredible financial difficulties. Thus, I have decided to abolish them in the second half of the year".⁶³

The French translation of Russian literature ended, but French art of the day became of key interest just two years later. While the general focus of *The Golden Fleece* was on the Russian arts and the promotion of Russian art abroad, in 1908 French art took a centre stage in the journal. After the Salon of *The Golden Fleece* of 1908, the journal displayed a number of works by contemporary French artists such as Paul Claudel, Henri Matisse, Antoine Bourdelle, Maurice Denis, Henri Toulouse-Lautrec, Edgar Degas and the Dutchman Vincent Van Gogh, who lived and painted part of his life in France. The double issue, nos. 7–9 (1908), published an article, translated to Russian, about contemporary French art written by the French Symbolist theorist Charles Morice⁶⁴

61 Valerii Briusov, "Zolotoe runo," Valerii Briusov, *Sobranie sochinenii v semi tomakh*, vol. 6 (Moskva: Khudozhestvennaia literatura, 1975) 118.

62 Richardson, *Zolotoe runo* 68.

63 Bogomolov, "K istorii 'Zolotogo runa'" 53–54. Mercereau was fired and wanted to sue Riabushinskii, who eventually paid him a forfeit of 1,500 roubles (See Bogomolov, "Simvolistskaia Moskva").

64 Sharl' [Charles] Moris [Morice], "Novye tendentsii frantsuzskoi zhivopisi," *Zolotoe runo* 7–8–9 (1908): v–xiii.

and another article by Maksimilian Voloshin (1877–1932).⁶⁵ In its last year of publication, *The Golden Fleece* devoted entire issues to French artists. Thus, no. 1 (1909) was entirely devoted to Paul Gauguin. This issue presented fifteen reproductions of his artworks (the wood sculptures) and translated sections from Gauguin's *Noa-Noa*.⁶⁶ Another of Morice's translated articles was devoted to Gauguin's sculptures and was published in one of the following issues.⁶⁷ Moreover, Maurice Denis was commissioned to write an article about Van Gogh and Gauguin, which was published in nos. 5 and 6 (1909).⁶⁸ Richardson reports that in 1909, Denis visited Moscow and met with Riabushinskii several times.⁶⁹ Another contemporary French artist who gained the editorial board's attention was Matisse; issue no. 6 (1909) was devoted to him and featured Mercereau's article about this artist.⁷⁰ Perhaps, if the journal had not ceased publication, its interest in French and European art in general would have grown further and resulted in more exhibits and articles.

The Editorial Statement

The editor-in-chief Riabushinskii did not have a clear program for his periodical. He relied on Sokolov (Krechetov) who considered himself the idea man of *The Golden Fleece* during the first year. Sokolov may have written the editorial statement⁷¹ that opened the journal and was printed in a gilded type (Fig. 3.4). The idea of quest implied in the title (discussion follows) was an articulation of the notion of the search for beauty and the value of art. In addition, according to the high-flown editorial statement, the journal's makers, "the pursuers of the Golden Fleece" (*iskateli zolotogo runa*), saw their mission as a quest for the unattainable sublimity of art, beauty and artistic spirituality. Simultaneously, the manifesto represented a justification for producing such a luxurious edition in unstable political and social conditions:

65 Maksimilian Voloshin, "Ustremleniia novoi frantsuzskoi zhivopisi," *Zolotoe runo* 7-8-9 (1908): xvii–ix.

66 Pol [Paul] Gogen [Gauguin], "Otryvki iz Noa-Noa," *Zolotoe runo* 1 (1909): ii–vii; the publication was continued in no. 6, 1909, 68–71.

67 Sharl' Moris, "Gogen kak skul'ptor," *Zolotoe runo* 7-8-9 (1909): 132–135; 10 (1909): 47–52.

68 Moris [Maurice] Deni [Denis], "Ot Gogena i Van-Goga k klassitsizmu," *Zolotoe runo* 5 (1909): 63–69; 5 (1909): 64–68.

69 Richardson, *Zolotoe runo* 154.

70 Aleksandr [Alexandre] Mersero [Mercereau], "Anri Matiss i sovremennaiia zhovopis'," *Zolotoe runo* 6 (1909): I–III. See the details of *The Golden Fleece* interest in French art in Richardson, *Zolotoe runo* 153–158.

71 Lavrov, "Zolotoe runo" 143.

We embark on our journey at a formidable time. Around us life is renewing itself, seething like a raging whirlpool. In the crash of battle, in the midst of urgent questions that are put forward daily, and among the bloody answers given them by our Russian actuality, for many people that which is Eternal grows dim and retreats into the distance.

We sympathize with all those who work for the renewal of life, we do not deny a single one of the problems of the present, but we firmly believe

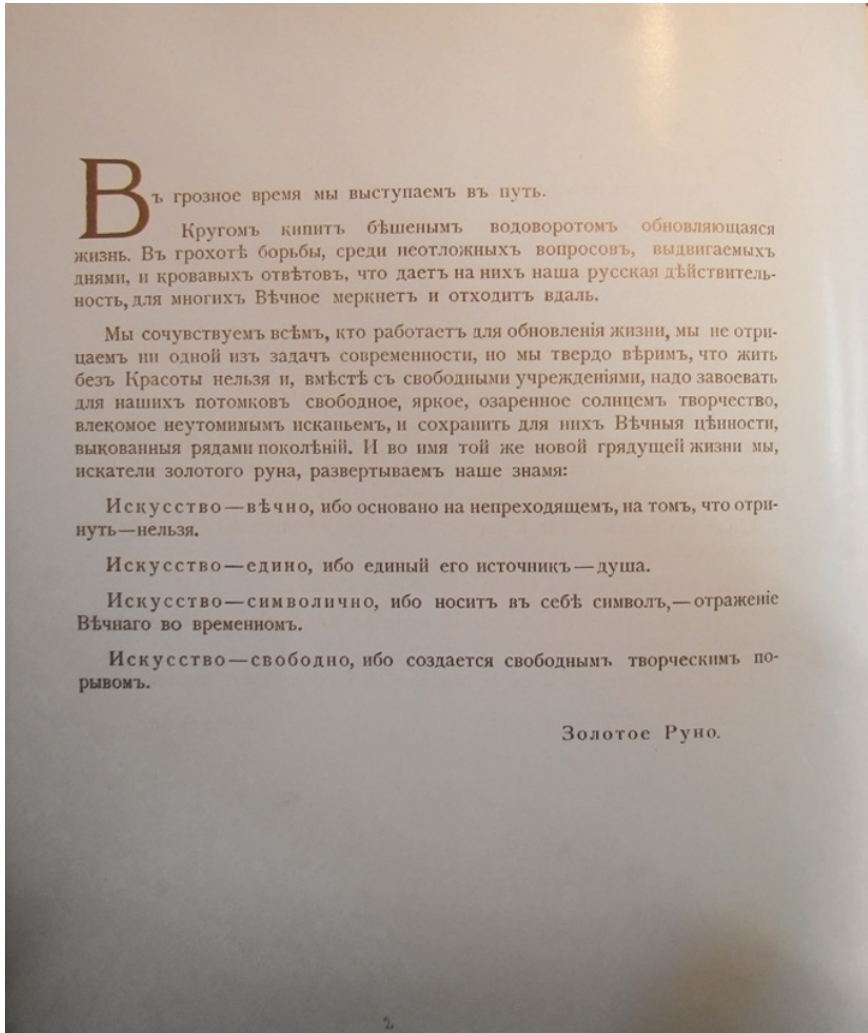


FIGURE 3.4 *Page with the editorial manifesto in The Golden Fleece (Zolotoe runo), no. 1, 1906. Golden ink.*

COURTESY OF THE FRICK ART REFERENCE LIBRARY.

that it is impossible to live without Beauty...and together with free institutions...we must preserve for [our descendants] the eternal values forged over generations. And in the name of the life that is coming, we, the seekers for the Golden Fleece, unfold our banner:

Art is eternal, for it is founded on the intransient; on that which is impossible to reject.

Art is indivisible because its single source is the soul.

Art is symbolic, for it carries in itself a symbol – the reflection of the Eternal in the temporal.

*Art is free for it is created by the free creative impulse*⁷² (Fig. 3.4).

This announcement appeared to be a simplified summary of Briusov's pivotal article "The Keys of Mystery" ("Kliuchi tain"), which was published in 1904 as an editorial statement in *The Scales*.⁷³ As Bogomolov reports in his textual analysis of the first draft of Briusov's article, "The Keys of Mystery", itself, was originally conceived as an extended essay intended for publication in the *World of Art*.⁷⁴ Bogomolov quotes Briusov's letter to Diaghilev from 1903, where he describes his future publication as a work of four chapters.⁷⁵

Briusov's article corresponded to the mandate of the *World of Art* and Diaghilev's expectations. Briusov, for example, criticized Tolstoi's "What is Art?" and disparaged the advocates of so-called "useful art" [*poleznoe iskusstvo*], Ruskin among them. However, due to the closure of the *World of Art* in 1904 and official permission to launch a new Symbolist periodical in the previous year (1903),⁷⁶ Briusov decided to publish an abridged version of his article in *The Scales*, the journal he edited. The reworked text published in *The Scales* represented a program for the Russian Symbolists and a

72 "Ot redaktsii," *Zolotoe Runo* 1 (1906): 4. Translated by William Richardson in Richardson, *Zolotoe runo* 29.

73 Valerii Briusov, "Kliuchi tain," *Vesy* 1 (1904): 3–21; See also its republication in Valerii Briusov, *Sobranie sochinenii*, vol. 6. *Stat'i i retsenzii 1893–1924* (Moskva: Khudozhestvennaia literatura, 1975) 78–93. For discussion of Briusov and his journal *The Scales* see K.M. Azadovskii and D.E. Maksimov, "Briusov i 'Vesy,'" *Literaturnoe nasledstvo. Valerii Briusov*, ed. V. G. Bazanov et al. (Moskva: Nauka, 1976) 257–324.

74 Nikolai Bogomolov, "K istorii 'Kliuchei tain,'" *Vokrug "Serebriannogo veka". Stat'i i materialy* by N. Bogomolov (Moskva: Novoe literaturnoe obozrenie, 2010) 259.

75 Bogomolov, "K istorii 'Kliuchei tain'" 259.

76 A.V. Lavrov and D.E. Maksimov, "Vesy," *Russkaia literatura i zhurnalistika nachala xx veka. 1905–1917: Burzhuazno-liberal'nye i modernistskie izdaniia*, ed. B.A. Bialik (Moskva: Nauka, 1984) 66.

manifesto of the new Symbolist periodical. It appeared in the inaugural issue of *The Scales*.

Sokolov-Krechetov (if, indeed, he wrote the manifesto in *The Golden Fleece*) may have had Briusov's article before him while composing the text. In fact, Briusov's views were extremely important for Riabushinskii. Sergei Vinogradov⁷⁷ recalled that the publisher himself addressed to Briusov, calling him "the teacher" (*uchitel'*).⁷⁸ Therefore Riabushinskii could easily approve of and even encourage incorporating "borrowings" from Briusov's writings into the manifesto thereby showing that his journal was, in fact, moving along with the contemporary Russian avant-garde.

Thus, the main principles about art were "borrowed" from Briusov, where they were more comprehensively explained. In *The Golden Fleece*'s manifesto, the same principles appeared as slightly re-phrased and simplified bare-naked slogans. Hence, in his text Briusov wrote: "Making art means opening the doors to Eternity".⁷⁹ Meanwhile, *The Golden Fleece* declared: "Art is eternal". Briusov stated: "History of the new art is the history of its liberation. Romanticism, Realism and Symbolism are three stages of the artists' struggle for freedom. Now art is finally free".⁸⁰ *The Golden Fleece*'s manifesto announced: "Art is free for it is created by the free creative impulse". Both Briusov's article and its weak echo in *The Golden Fleece* reiterated the Russian "art for art's sake" point of view, since both Briusov and Sokolov (less strategically, however) refer to the ultimate value of art.

The manifesto of *The Golden Fleece* was a Symbolist statement at its core, but, according to Briusov, it did not express anything new or fresh. The Symbolist poet and theorist uttered his criticism in the article "Links. II. The Golden Fleece" ("Zven'ia. II. Zolotoe runo"), published in the newspaper *Word (Slovo)* on 27 March 1906. In this article Briusov straightforwardly pointed out *The Golden Fleece*'s editorial board's "borrowings":

This "new" journal tells me about something old, about something that was brought from the past. The "Golden Fleece" that is offered to readers was not discovered by this periodical, but by others long before [*The*

77 Sergei Vinogradov (1869–1938) was a Russian artist and a member of the Wanderers. In 1900–1903, he participated in the World of Art exhibits and in 1898–1913, he taught at the Stroganov College of Arts (*Stroganovskoe uchilishche iskusstv*) in Moscow. Vinogradov was one of the founders of the Union of Russian Artists (*Soiuz russkikh khudozhnikov*) (Severiukhin and Leikind, *Zolotoi vek* 116; 282–285; 302).

78 Sergei Vinogradov, *Prezhniaia Moskva. Vospominaniia*, ed. Nina Lapidus (Riga: MultiCentrs, 2001) 142.

79 Briusov, "Kliuchi tain" 91.

80 Briusov, "Kliuchi tain" 93.

Golden Fleece] embarked... There are no new names in the first two issues of *The Golden Fleece* ...; new groups are not introduced in *The Golden Fleece* as they were in *The New Way* or *The Questions of Life*... The only thing that draws these people together in this solemn mausoleum set up for the Argo with the golden sail built to "entertain common people" ("*na divo cherni prostodushnoi*"⁸¹) is their past... There is nothing new to fight for in *The Golden Fleece*. Its path is identified as the one blazed by the French Symbolists during the past thirty years and was travelled by the Russian Symbolists during the last decade. All the thoughts presented by *The Golden Fleece* were already expressed in *The Northern Herald* (*Severnyi vestnik*,⁸² 1885–1898), the *World of Art* and *The Scales*; so it would have been enough to republish the pages from these publications.⁸³

In his article Briusov sounds utterly critical implying that *The Golden Fleece* is just a "popular magazine" rather than a serious publication for the intellectual elite. He also states that its content repeats *The Scales* and other predecessors including the *World of Art*. It is noteworthy to remind the reader that *The Golden Fleece* appeared as a rival to *The Scales* and Briusov, even though he participated in *The Golden Fleece* as an author, demonstrated his negative stance toward the competing periodical. Nonetheless, in the same article, he admitted that *The Golden Fleece* was a publication that allowed artists to express themselves in full measure and acknowledged its high typographic quality.⁸⁴

Reception of the Journal by Contemporaries

In spite his ambiguous status among the Russian cultural elite, Riabushinskii engaged the best writers and artists of the day to contribute to his monthly. The artistic elite participated in the journal tongue in cheek: Riabushinskii was not a refined intellectual, but he paid his authors and designers well. The first issue, however, was received negatively not only by the journal's contributor Briusov, but also by other notable contemporaries. As soon as *The Golden Fleece* came off the press, *The Scales* published a reaction under the

81 Here Briusov used the strophe from Lermontov's poem, "Do not believe yourself" (*Ne ver' sebe*), 1838.

82 *The Northern Herald* was published in St Petersburg. Originally it was an organ of the so-called populists (*narodniki*) and in the 1890s it became the annual of the Russian Symbolists, Merezhkovskii, Gippius, Sologub, Minskii and others.

83 Valerii Briusov, "Zolotoe runo," *Sobranie sochinenii v semi tomakh* by Valerii Briusov, vol. 6 (Moskva: Khudozhestvennaia literatura, 1973) 117–118.

84 Briusov, "Zolotoe runo" 117–118.

pseudonym Comrade Hermann (*Tovarishch German*).⁸⁵ According to Olga Matich, this was Zinaida Gippius, the famous wife of Merezhkovskii and a participant of the *World of Art* who often employed a male identity in her writings and cross-dressed in real life.⁸⁶ Her review was particularly scathing and dismissive.

Using metaphorical allusions, Gippius compared the publisher Riabushinskii to a luxuriously dressed merchant woman, by giving him the exotic name Sunduleia Vakhrameevna (which invoked the merchant origins of Riabushinskii). According to Gippius, in spite of her “expensive Parisian dress and wide reading”, Sunduleia Vakhrameevna behaved unpredictably. This statement, probably, meant to point out the extravagant character of Riabushinskii. Furthermore, Gippius compared the new periodical's opulent appearance to a gilded invitation to the “richest Moscow wedding”. The editorial statement was also the subject of mockery: “I am pretty sure that there is no a single reader who is not aware that there is beauty and art; and that art and beauty are eternal. But why should one announce that on...the wedding invitation? ... ‘The wedding invitation’ is repeated in French. Apparently, the French do know that they cannot live without beauty and that it is eternal”.⁸⁷ The “wedding” ironically referred to Riabushinskii's exorbitant banquets and participation in the journal would open up a possibility to participate in his profligate parties. On the other hand, the comparison of the journal's appearance to a “wedding invitation” meant for Gippius that journals exist to express words, not images and were not supposed to be sumptuously adorned with gold and silver ink. The former participant of the *World of Art*'s literary department did not concern herself with the appearance of typographic quality and art reproduction in either in the *World of Art* or in *The Golden Fleece*. Even more so, the appearance of the in-text reproductions destabilized Gippius's understanding of the main purpose of print culture as a provider of “printed word”. Thus, she ironically mentioned the *World of Art*'s in-text reproductions in her memoirs,

Merezhkovskii's serious research, which took three years to conduct, was published in the *World of Art* for the first time. Its wide pages were often covered with transparent (*prozrachnymi*) and sometimes colour

85 Tovarishch German, “Zolotoe runo,” *Vesy* 2 (1906): 81–83.

86 See Chapter 5 in Olga Matich, *Erotic Utopia. The Decadent Imagination in Russia's Fin De Siècle* (Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 2005) 162–211. More about Gippius see in A.N. Nikoliukin, ed. and comp., *Z.N. Gippius: pro et contra* (Sankt-Peterburg: Izdatel'stvo Russkoi khristianskoi gumanitarnoi akademii, 2008).

87 Tovarishch German 82.

pictures of various artists. The delirious shades of Goya saturated the text of Merezhkovskii's *L. Tostoi and Dostoevskii (po tekstu L. Tolstogo i Dostoevskogo guliali, pomnitsia mne, bredovye teni Goya)*.⁸⁸

Under the term "transparent pictures" Gippius understood black-and-white graphic works reproduced in the journal. The reproductions, in fact, could easily have disturbed her and Merezhkovskii, for whom a serious reading should not be interrupted by pictures suitable for lowbrow popular magazines. Gippius, however, acknowledged that inserting in-text reproductions was a new approach in typography at this time and indicated that she and her husband merely accepted this fact.⁸⁹ However, according to Petr Pertsov, the writer, journalist and literary critic and participant of the *World of Art*, the Merezhkovskii were in a fight with the "aesthetes" of the journal, who did not like the publication of *L. Tolstoi and Dostoevskii* in the *World of Art*. Pertsov commented that Gippius and Merezhkovskii openly criticized in-text reproductions that interrupted Merezhkovskii's text. This opposition resulted in printing reproductions of Aubrey Beardsley's erotic graphic art works in one of the numbers, which infuriated the writer and his extravagant wife enormously.⁹⁰

Benois, whose understanding of print culture was much closer to Riabushinskii's views, nevertheless, also expressed a very negative reception of the first issues. His criticism never appeared in print, however, only in his diaries. In an entry from 1906, he wrote about the cover page with the mermaid (the discussion of graphic design follows) in very unflattering terms: "The prospectus [booklet-advertisement] for *The Golden Fleece* was received from Riabushinskii. There is a terrible cover-page drawing".⁹¹ And the next passage reads: "I received the first issue of *The Golden Fleece*. The height of tastelessness. None of my friends (*moikh*) [i.e. none of the *World of Art*'s members – Lanceray, Dobuzhinskii and Bakst] excelled. Vrubel' is awful". Benois's evaluation of the literary section was even worse: "[I] have read Belyi's tasteless, pretentious drama, the beautiful but unnecessary 'Octaves' by Merezhkovskii, the obscure poetry by Bal'mont".⁹² Benois, who lived in France when the periodical appeared, was passionately interested in everything happening in Russia, but he did not accept *The Golden Fleece* with laudatory applause. His negative perception, however, did not

88 Zinaida Gippius-Merezhkovskaia, *Dmitrii Merezhkovskii* (Parizh: YMCA-Press, 1951) 81–82.

89 Gippius-Merezhkovskaia 82.

90 Pertsov, 211.

91 Benua, "Dnevnik 1906 goda. (Versal'. Parizh)."

92 Benua, "Dnevnik 1906 goda. (Versal'. Parizh)."

prevent him from submitting articles, vignettes and artwork to *The Golden Fleece*. Thus, no. 2, 1906 featured Benois's radical article "Artistic Heresies" ("Khudozhetvennye eresi"), one of his most important texts;⁹³ and the issue no. 10, 1906 was fully devoted to reproductions of Benois's artwork and featured an article about him.

Contemporaries from other "ideological" camps also evaluated the literary sections of the first issues negatively. *God's World* (*Mir Bozhii*, 1892–1906), the organ of the literary Realists, published in St Petersburg, published a very critical review of *The Golden Fleece*. Vladimir Kranikhfeld uttered that the reader had to be prepared to read literature that was the product of "delirium tremens and nightmare" and was saturated with "feverous voluptuousness and numerous grimaces".⁹⁴ Benois's article "Artistic Heresies", however, was received positively. Kranikhfeld even suggested that in his opinion, the position of *The Golden Fleece* appeared contrary to Benois's article.⁹⁵

Contemporaries acknowledged *The Golden Fleece*'s printing and reproduction quality; it was not seen, however, as an advantage or achievement but rather as pompous exhibitionism pointless in periodical production in general. The perception of the journal through the prism of Riabushinskii's controversial personality prevented the Russian cultural elite from participating in the journal with enthusiasm comparable to their passionate involvement in the *World of Art*. In their imagination, *The Golden Fleece* was just a whim of an uneducated pseudo-dandy merchant progeny whose spendthrift life-style was stretching toward journal production. In order to celebrate his personal involvement in artistic life by the publication of the lavish periodical, Riabushinskii failed to build a group identity and rather created an "autocracy" in the editorial board. This "autocratic" rule, however, resulted in the construction of a unique and refined art object, the periodical *The Golden Fleece*.

The Golden Fleece: The Paratextual Dimension

Extravagance in the "Time of Troubles": From "Materialism" to "Materiality"

Late 1905 in Russia, when the journal was conceived and launched, was a period characterized by social and political instability. The first issue of *The*

93 Aleksandr Benua, "Khudozhetvennye eresi," *Zolotoe runo* 2 (1906): 80–88.

94 Vladimir Kranikhfel'd, "Zhurnal'nye otgoloski," *Mir bozhii* 4 (1906): 58. Vladimir Kranikhfel'd (1865–1918) was a literary critic and journalist.

95 Kranikhfel'd 59.

Golden Fleece was introduced to the public in December 1905, in the midst of the revolutionary events of 1905. The December barricades were just several blocks away from the publishing house where the first issues of the periodical were printed. Mikhail Mamontov (1865–1920), the co-owner of the printing house of A. Mamontov, recalled: "It was very bizarre to see pages that did not say a word about the barricades that shook our life's principles coming out of the presses".⁹⁶

Against this background of political uncertainty the new art journal appeared as a symbol of refined art, lavish design and extravagance. The body of the book became a symbol of luxury itself and irresponsible spending. This piece of craftsmanship and journal "jewelry" was printed in quarto-sized format (32.5 × 30 cm),⁹⁷ which resembled the Austrian art periodical *Ver Sacrum*. The above-mentioned editorial statement was printed in golden ink. The subscribers received every issue in a case with a gilded cord.⁹⁸

Riabushinskii invested a lot of money in his periodical. Such expenditure resulted in the creation of a formidable example of periodical craftsmanship. *The Golden Fleece* continued the print revival initiated by the *World of Art*, but did so in a flamboyant and decidedly modernized way. *The Golden Fleece* was printed exclusively in Russia. By the time it was launched, printing techniques in Russia had proliferated and significantly improved. Mikhail Mamontov stated: "All of us from the typesetters to the owners of the printing house took a great interest in N. Riabushinskii's undertaking. He required only one thing – to make the journal elegant and adorned as much as possible. Of course, we tried to satisfy the requests of our customer, who spent money right and left. And it seems that we were able to create a good edition".⁹⁹ Even in his already quoted very critical article on *The Golden Fleece*, Briusov, the editor of *The Scales*, the main rival to *The Golden Fleece*, acknowledged that the quality of its reproductions and illustrations could compete with the best editions in the West.¹⁰⁰

The journal was printed on expensive paper; letterheads with Lanceray's emblem of *The Golden Fleece* were ordered (Fig. 3.5). A special seal for the "Editor-publisher" that confirmed Riabushinskii's signature was created. High-priced reproduction techniques were used to make phototypes and each of

96 Qtd. in Viktor Lobanov, *Kanuny. Iz khudozhestvennoi zhizni Moskvy v predrevoliutsionnye gody* (Moskva: Sovetskii khudozhnik, 1968) 179.

97 Sizes of existing physical copies of the journal preserved at different locations differ due to their bindings.

98 Dumova 90.

99 Lobanov 181.

100 Briusov, "Zolotoe runo" 116.



FIGURE 3.5

Eugene Lanceray. Logo of The Golden Fleece (Zolotoe runo), 1905.

COURTESY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS AT URBANA-CHAMPAIGN LIBRARY.

these expensive reproductions was covered with the finest imported (likely from Japan) silk paper.

The luxury and especially the quality of the print surpassed the *World of Art* by far; the price was much above average: a one-year subscription was 15 roubles within Moscow (12 issues were published in 1906). This expensive rate, ultimately a considerable amount of money, limited the number of subscribers, which also contributed further to the journal's bankruptcy. In comparison to other periodicals of the day, this one was easily the most expensive. For example, the subscription rate for the *World of Art* was 10 roubles per year for residents of St Petersburg; 12 roubles for other cities and 14 roubles for those who lived abroad. The price of other contemporary periodicals was more reasonable. *The Scales*, which never focused on expensive reproduction or luxury, cost 5 roubles per year, making it the most affordable among all the journals. The annual subscription of the art-historical journal *The Olden Years* (*Starye gody*, 1907–1916), which would be published from 1907, and which also featured art reproductions, cost 6 roubles (Fig. 3.6). *Art's* price was 10 roubles without delivery and 12 with (8 issues were published in total); Merezhkovskii's brain-child *The New Way* (*Novyi Put'*, 1902–1904) was priced at 7 roubles; and the most expensive among general editions was *The New World* (*Novyi Mir*, 1898–1905). It cost 14 roubles per year; the price, however, included ten yearly supplements and the illustrated periodical *Picturesque Russia* (*Zhivopisnaia Rossiia*).

The high life extended to the editorial office of *The Golden Fleece*, where every Thursday banquets with champagne and delicacies for the employees were organized.¹⁰¹ The financial report of the journal's expenses during the first year of publication was released in the last issue of 1906. It stated that 83,783.85 roubles were spent during the first year; income from sales was only

101 Bogomolov, "Simvolistskaia Moskva glazami frantsuzskogo poeta".



FIGURE 3.6 Cover page of *The Olden Years* (Starye gody), no. 1, 1907.

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LIBRARY.

11,965.45 roubles.¹⁰² The journal's expenses were a substantial sum of money – before the revolution a major state official's salary was about 25,000 roubles per year.¹⁰³ The financial losses from the first year were about 72 thousand roubles, which would be equal to approximately \$860,000 today.¹⁰⁴

Thus, the first year of publication resulted in irreparable financial damage. Riabushinskii, however, celebrated the disastrous financial results with a deluxe banquet. Before each place setting, a card detailing the economic damage was presented. The banquet tables were embellished with ice blocks and colourful illuminated lanterns. Each block served as a holder for a bucket of caviar, while the table, in mid-January, was decorated with a thick rows of natural lilies of the valley.¹⁰⁵

The Title: Meaning and Sources

Before *The Golden Fleece* and *The Scales* appeared, all titles of Russian art journals (e.g. *Russian Art Archive*, *The Survey of Graphic Arts*, *The Herald of Fine Arts*, *The Art Treasures of Russia*, *Art and Art Industry*) were fairly utilitarian and transparent: it is noteworthy that all periodicals used the word “art”. Even the *World of Art* was direct in articulating the idea of an all-embracing art. *The Golden Fleece* was less straightforward and implied a symbolic meaning. The Symbolists introduced the new fashion of using metaphors or “symbols” in their titles.

The “Golden Fleece” did not refer directly to art. Perhaps, in using a metaphoric title, the editorial team followed *The Scales*, which was the first in Russia to introduce an ambiguous and obscure symbolic title and encouraged contemplation of the zodiac (Libra) to extract various meanings. As Richardson suggests, the title represented a “rejection of social contemporaneity” in direct contrast to the “thick journals”, which were much more concerned with social issues of the day.¹⁰⁶

Readers would have been aware of the title of *The Golden Fleece* even before they subscribed to the journal or bought a single issue: they would have seen the advertisement about the launch of the new journal in the press or received a prospectus with an announcement by mail.¹⁰⁷ Indeed, for most

102 “Otchet za 1906 god,” *Zolotoe runo* 12 (1906): 9 (“Prilozhenie k no. 12”).

103 Valerii Chumakov, *Russkii Kapital. Ot Demidovykh do Nobelei* (Moskva: NTs ENAS, 2008) 23 June, 2012 <http://www.e-reading.org.ua/bookreader.php/70497/Chumakov__Russkii_kapital._Ot_Demidovykh_do_Nobelei.html>.

104 Several years before, in 1899, Riabushinskii spent more than 200 thousand roubles to entertain his lover, a café-chantant singer. See details in Chumakov.

105 Vinogradov 140.

106 Richardson, *Zolotoe runo* 37.

107 This already-mentioned fact is stated in Alexandre Benois's diary: Aleksandr Benua, “Dnevnik 1906 goda. (Versal'. Parizh),” *Nashe nasledie* 77 (2006) 28 April, 2009 <<http://www.nasledie-rus.ru/podshivka/7713.php>>.

readers (namely, the educated elite), the obvious tool for decoding the title would have been the Ancient Greek myth closely associated with Colchis (in today's Georgia, then a part of the Russian Empire). Colchis, according to legend, was a region rich in gold and the "Golden Fleece" signifies the conquest of the impossible or the unattainable. The sheep is an ancient Greek symbol of innocence, while gold symbolizes spirituality and glory. The Golden Fleece is also a solar symbol.¹⁰⁸ Generally speaking, the "Golden Fleece" denotes the quest of the Argonauts for the unattainable through purity of soul.

The idea of the title was expressed by Lanceray's gilded logo that represented a round mosaic-like stamp, showing the ship Argo sailing (Fig. 3.5). Its shape suggested that Lanceray knew the images of Greek boats available in European museums and in the Hermitage. The curls of the sea waves resembled Archaic Greek (Mycenaean) ornamentation motifs. The round shape echoed Attic Greek paintings usually made inside a kylix. This logo was also printed on the frontispiece of the first issue of the periodical.

The title chosen to represent the main idea of the journal appears to be connected to the Moscow University circle known as the "Argonauts", one of whose members was Belyi. Gofman, for example, closely associates the idea of the Golden Fleece with Belyi's short story "Argonauts" (1904), in which the author, invoking two famous legends (the Golden Fleece story and the myth about Daedalus and Icarus), appeals to humanity to leave Earth and fly to the Sun. The main character of the story, "the great writer", who departs for the Sun (as did Icarus, who was destined to fail), asserts: "I will publish the journal *The Golden Fleece*. Argonauts will be my colleagues, and the Sun will be our banner.... The entire world will be gilded".¹⁰⁹

The short story "Argonauts" was written in 1904. A year earlier, Belyi wrote the cycle of poems called "The Golden Fleece" ("Zolotoe runo", 1903), a selection from which was included in his seminal article "Symbolism as Weltanschauung" ("Simvolizm kak miroponimanie"), written and delivered as a public lecture to the circle of "Argonauts" in 1903¹¹⁰ and subsequently published in issue no. 5 (1904) of the *World of Art*. In his poem Belyi exclaimed: "Children of the sun!

108 See the discussion of the ancient symbolism of the "Golden Fleece" in Jean-Pierre Sanchez, "El Dorado' and the Myth of the Golden Fleece," *The Classical Tradition and the Americas. Volume 1: European Images of the Americas and the Classical Tradition*, ed. Wolfgang Haase and Meyer Reinhold (Berlin & New York: Walter de Gruyter, 1994) 337–378.

109 Andrei Belyi, "Argonavty," qtd. in Gofman, "'Zolotoe runo' 1906–1909. U istokov russkogo avangarda."

110 See note 6 in "Andrei Belyi – Briusovu. Serebrianyi Kolodez'. 9 avgusta 1903 goda," Bazanov, 364.

Again there is the coldness of impassivity: / There is a sunset – / Of the golden olden happiness, / The Golden Fleece”.¹¹¹ The article and the quoted poem referred to Friedrich Nietzsche, while by the Golden Fleece Belyi understood the sun.¹¹² In his letter to the philosopher and founder of the Symbolist publishing house “Musaget”, Emiliia Metner (1872–1936), Belyi wrote in March 1903: “...I and one young man [Leo Kobylinskii, 1879–1947] are going to organize a secret society in the name of Nietzsche – the union of Argonauts. Its aim is esoteric: we will study literature, dedicated to Schopenhauer and Nietzsche, and their own writings as well. The aim is esoteric – we will travel ‘through’ Nietzsche in hopes of discovering the Golden Fleece”.¹¹³ In his memoirs Belyi states that the poem “The Golden Fleece” appeared first; only later Ellis (Kobylinskii) assigned the name “Argonauts” to the group,¹¹⁴ associating it with the poem about the Golden Fleece.¹¹⁵ In regards to Belyi’s myth-making, Lavrov observes:

The Argonauts did not take from Nietzsche the real content of his philosophical-aesthetic views. Rather, their ideas resonated chiefly with his stance of bold opposition to traditional attitudes and commonly accepted value systems, his conflict with the age, and his attempt to move beyond the limits of the permissible and the possible. For the Argonauts Nietzsche was a sign that the positivist foundations of the life they rejected were undergoing a crisis and that the world was standing on the brink of renewal and transformation.¹¹⁶

Belyi’s discovery of Nietzsche occurred in the late 1890s and early 1900s. In 1899, he had read *Thus Spoke Zarathustra*, which left an indelible impression on him and became his handbook. He would later write in his memoirs: “from the fall of 1899 I lived for Nietzsche” (*zhivu Nitsshe*).¹¹⁷

Friedrich Nietzsche made an impact not only on Belyi and his views and literary works; in turn-of-the-century Russia, Nietzsche became one of the most

111 Deti solntsa! Vnov’ kholod besstrast’ia: / Zakatilos’ ono – / Zolotoe, starinnoe schast’e, / Zolotoe runo. See: Andrei Belyi, “Simvolizm kak miroponimanie,” *Simvolizm kak miroponimanie* by Andrei Belyi (Moskva: Respublika, 1994) 254–255.

112 Andrei Belyi, *Nachalo veka* (Moskva: Khudozhestvennaia literatura, 1990) 123.

113 See note 217 for Chapter 1 in Belyi, *Nachalo veka* 590.

114 The extended discussion of “Argonautism” of Belyi and his mythmaking see in Alexander Lavrov, “Andrei Bely and the Argonauts’ Mythmaking,” *Creating the Life. Aesthetic Utopia of Russian Modernism*, ed. Irina Paperno and Joan Delaney Grossman (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1994) 83–121.

115 Belyi, *Nachalo veka* 123.

116 Lavrov, “Andrei Bely and the Argonauts” 88.

117 Andrei Belyi, *Na rubezhe dvukh stoletii* (Moskva: Khudozhestvennaia literatura, 1989) 434–5.

significant philosophers, influencing cultural life and literature, even though his works began to be published only from 1898, when the ban was lifted. Nietzsche had been completely prohibited from 1872 to 1898, his writings perceived as a threat to established moral norms. Moreover, due to severe censorship that lasted until 1905, Nietzsche¹¹⁸ was not widely known; only the literary elite enjoyed reading his books, mostly in the original, while living in Europe, or in rare translations. One of the first translations of his publications was made in 1894 by Princess Anna Dmitrievna Tenisheva¹¹⁹ and published in the Moscow journal *Actor* (*Artist*, 1889–1895). It was a heavily censored excerpt from *The Case of Wagner*.¹²⁰ The *World of Art* was among the first periodicals that featured translations of Nietzsche: in 1900 it published *Richard Wagner in Bayreuth* (1876),¹²¹ and in the volume 13–24, between pages 48 and 49, it inserted an obituary of the philosopher. The first publication of all his works in Russian translation began appearing only in 1909, initiated by a group of well-known writers and thinkers, among them the philosophers Semen Frank (1877–1950) and Mikhail Gershenzon (1869–1925), and poets Bal'mont, Briusov, Belyi and Viacheslav Ivanov (1866–1949).¹²²

When *The Golden Fleece* appeared in late 1905, the "Argonaut" Ellis (Kobylnskii) was shocked by the blatant "plagiarism" and "theft" of the title. He also reserved the "Golden Fleece" as his own symbol:

A symbol is a roadmark of experience; it is a conventional sign saying, "Remember what was revealed to you at such a time, about which it is a *sin* to rationalize and *comic* to argue..." Sometimes a symbol says, "I will help you remember and once again experience this"... This is the way I look on my own symbol – the Golden Fleece. It is a conventional sign, it is a hand, pointing out the entrance to the house... "Arise and walk"... But the content of that symbol is given to me by my intellect and moral instinct, which were developed before I invented the symbol of the fleece.¹²³

118 Nietzsche's influence is discussed further in the next chapter.

119 Anna Dmitrievna Tenisheva (née Zamiatina) was the first wife of Prince Viacheslav Tenishev. His second wife was the aforementioned Mariia Tenisheva (née Piatkovskaia), the sponsor of the *World of Art* and Talashkino workshops. After her divorce from Prince Tenishev, Anna Dmitrievna would open embroidery and lace workshops in her estate Aleksandrova of Mtsenskii uезд, Orel guberniia. The production from her workshops would be exhibited at the *Exposition Universelle* in Paris in 1900 (Larisa Zhuravleva 48–49).

120 Edith W. Clowes, *The Revolution of Moral Consciousness: Nietzsche in Russian Literature 1890–1914* (DeKalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 1988) 43.

121 Fridrikh [Friedrich] Nitsshe [Nietzsche], "Vagner v Bairete," *Mir Iskusstva* 1–12; (1900): 59–63; 99–102; 13–24 (1900): 95–99.

122 Clowes 44–47.

123 See Ellis's letter to Belyi, autumn, 1903 qtd. in Lavrov, "Andrei Bely and the Argonauts" 87.

This view notwithstanding, the idea of the “Golden Fleece” was not the personal mythological “property” of the “Argonauts”. Several years prior to the arrival of the periodical, the symbolism of the “Golden Fleece” had already been widely popularized. The mythology and myth-making in relation to the symbolism of the “Golden Fleece” in Russia was re-introduced in 1901–02 by Stanisław Przybyszewski (1868–1927), the Polish Modernist writer, who also wrote in German and, according to Richard Sokoloski, played a distinguished role in many European literatures of the early twentieth century: Polish, German, Russian, Czech, Norwegian, Croatian, and Bulgarian.¹²⁴ The first Russian translations of his works began appearing in 1898 and his novel *Homo Sapiens* was one of the most widely read works among Russians.¹²⁵ The *World of Art* also introduced Przybyszewski to its readers: his article “On the Souls’ Ways” (*Na putiakh dushi*) was published in the journal in 1902.¹²⁶ In 1903 and 1904, two articles about Przybyszewski as playwright were written by the critic V. Peremilovskii in the *World of Art*.¹²⁷ *The Golden Fleece* would later issue book reviews of his works, printed by the publishing house “The Scorpion”,¹²⁸ parts of the poem in prose “The Cherub” (*Kheruvim*),¹²⁹ the article “Toward an Ethics of Gender” (*K etike pola*)¹³⁰ and the novel *Doomsday* (*Den’ sudnyi*).¹³¹

In 1901, Przybyszewski published his innovative Symbolist drama *The Golden Fleece* (*Złote runo*), in which the “Golden Fleece” represented a symbol of unattainable love.¹³² This drama was subsequently translated and staged during

124 Richard Sokoloski, “‘The Faceless Prophet’ Stanisław Przybyszewski and Russian Modernism,” *Germano-Slavica: A Canadian Journal of Germanic and Slavic Comparative and Interdisciplinary Studies* 9/1-2 (1995–1996): 41.

125 Sokoloski 46.

126 Stanislav [Stanisław] Pshibyshevskii [Przybyszewski], “Na putiakh dushi,” *Mir Iskusstva* 7/5-6 (1902): 100–109.

127 V. Peremilovskii, “Stanislav Pshibyshevskii i ego dramy v Peterburge,” *Khronika zhurnala Mir Iskusstva* 4 (1903): 38–40; V. Peremilovskii, “Meterlink i Pshibyshevskii,” *Mir Iskusstva* 5 (1905): 104–108.

128 Nina Petrovskaiia, “Retseziia na knigu: Pshibyshevskii, Stanislav. Kn.III ‘Deti Satany’M.: Skorpion, 1906,” *Zolotoe runo* 6 (1906): 106–107; Vasilii Rozanov, “Retseziia na knigu: Pshibyshevskii Stanislav. Sochineniia. Perevod M.P. Semenova. M.: Skorpion, 1906. Kniga chetvertaia: ‘Zaupokoinaia messa,’” *Zolotoe runo* 7-8-9 (1906): 172–174.

129 Stanislav Pshibyshevskii, “Tirtei,” *Zolotoe runo* 2 (1907): 31–37; “Stezeiu Kaina,” *Zolotoe runo* 11–12 (1907): 50–7.

130 Stanislav Pshibyshevskii, “K etike pola,” *Zolotoe runo* 11–12 (1907): 63–7.

131 Stanislav Pshibyshevskii, “Den’ sudnyi: Roman,” *Zolotoe runo* 1 (1909); continued in issues 2–9.

132 The drama depicts two banal love triangles intersecting on the main protagonist, Doctor Rembovskii. Rembovskii, whose father committed suicide after his wife’s betrayal, is involved in a love affair with his colleague’s wife and has an illegitimate child from this

one of his visits to Russia in 1903–04.¹³³ During his first visit to St Petersburg in January 1903, Przybyszewski traveled with the private Polish troupe of Boleslavskii¹³⁴ that staged a series of his dramas, *The Golden Fleece* among them.¹³⁵ As the author, he delivered a cycle of lectures. Richard Sokoloski states that all productions were received with great enthusiasm.¹³⁶ Peremilovskii reported that Przybyszewski had directed the play personally and called his works "synthetic dramas", thereby expressing the necessity of "showing the soul on the stage, and use of a symbol by a dramatist".¹³⁷ During his second visit in 1904, *The Golden Fleece* was staged again, now in Odessa (Odesa) and Kishinev (Chişinău).¹³⁸

It is important to note that as early as 1902, Vsevolod Meyerhold (1874–1940) staged *The Golden Fleece* in Kherson and Vera Komissarzhevskaja (1864–1910) mounted her own version of the play in Khar'kov (Kharkiv).¹³⁹ In 1903–04, Komissarzhevskaja and her future troupe went on tour with *The Golden Fleece*

adultery. However, his infidelity in some mystical way appears to be avenged when his wife Irena falls in love with her childhood friend, the decadent writer Psheslavskii, a guest of Rembovskii. It is Psheslavskii, though, a protagonist with a formidable character, who most strongly evokes the meaning of the "Golden Fleece" in his struggle for love. He seduces Irena, who eventually confesses her betrayal to Rembovskii, who then suffers an emotional shock and commits suicide – just as his father had. In the final acts, Irena's interpretation of the "Golden Fleece" becomes a symbol of tragedy (Stanislav Pshibyshevskii, "Zolotoe runo," *Polnoe sobranie sochinenii* by Stanislav Pshibyshevskii, vol. 4. (Moskva: Izdanie V.M. Sablina, 1910)).

133 Poland was a part of the Russian Empire at the time. However, only a part of today's Belarus (Grodno [Hrodna] *huberniia*) and Poland (Białystok district) was included in the North-Western Territory of the Russian Empire. The rest of the Polish territories, the Polish Kingdom (*Królestwo Polskie*), were a separate territorial-administrative entity, which was granted autonomous status. Thus, Poland had separate state machinery and laws from those of Russia, and was ruled by a governor-general. Thus, every person who travelled from Poland to Russia and back was obliged to have a valid passport and the documents that allowed passing the border. So, for Przybyszewski, it was travel from one country to another.

134 Peremilovskii, "Stanislav Pshibyshevskii i ego dramy" 39.

135 Przybyszewski visited Petersburg in January – March 1903, and in July – December 1904, he traveled to Odessa, Kherson, Kishinev, and Elizavetgrad (now Kirovograd). See Sokoloski 48.

136 Sokoloski 48.

137 Peremilovskii, "Stanislav Pshibyshevskii i ego dramy" 39.

138 Tamara Agapkina, "Rosyjskie kontakty Stanisława Przybyszewskiego," *Stanisław Przybyszewski w 50-lecie zgonu pisarza* (Wrocław – Warszawa: Wydawnictwo Polskiej Akademii Nauk, 1982) 191–193.

139 Sokoloski 48–49.

and other plays in cities throughout the Russian Empire, including Moscow.¹⁴⁰ In 1905–06, *The Golden Fleece* was staged in Moscow at the Malyi Theatre.¹⁴¹ All these mean that “the Golden Fleece” was in the air and could elicit multiple associations and symbolic meanings.

Przybyszewski's interpretation of the symbol and reference to the myth was no less significant than the myth-making of the “secret society” of the “Argonauts”, and may have been widespread among the Russian cultural elite as it had been popularized by the theatrical production. Belyi's “secret society” and its elite meetings were not as popular as Przybyszewski's Symbolist-decadent fashionable allusion to the old myth. It is difficult to state who was the first to re-invent the “term”, Belyi or Przybyszewski. While Belyi's earliest attested use of the term is from 1903, Przybyszewski's drama was written in 1901. It had been staged in 1902 by Meyerhold, which means that the drama had been translated and made available to readers within a short period; so, by 1903, the phrase likely had a wide public resonance. Apparently, Przybyszewski did not know about Belyi's “secret society”, but Belyi definitely knew of Przybyszewski's new drama. We can only speculate whether Belyi invented his myth after reading or hearing about Przybyszewski's *Golden Fleece* or if it was an independent product of his own myth-making. It is important to mention here that Belyi was acquainted with Przybyszewski personally¹⁴² and wrote an article “The Prophet of Facelessness” (“Prorok bezlichiiia”) devoted to Przybyszewski's works.¹⁴³ In both his article and memoirs, however, Belyi never mentioned this important, as it seems now, intersection of myth-making.

Due to the popularization of an ancient myth in a Modernist re-interpretation, the idea of the “Golden Fleece” was very familiar. The inspiration for the journal's title might have come from the various above-mentioned sources, but also from the acute turn-of-the-century interest in Classical mythology and archeology as well as in the classical revival.¹⁴⁴ What is known is that it was Sokolov-Krechetov, the chief of the literary-critical section of the journal, who proposed this “resonant” and highly topical title to Riabushinskii.

140 A. Al'tshuller, ed. and comp., *Vera Fedorovna Komissarzhevskaiia. Pis'ma aktrisy, vospominaniia o nei, materialy* (Leningrad – Moskva: Iskusstvo, 1964) 333–335.

141 Agapkina 177.

142 Belyi, *Mezhdru dvukh revoliutsii* 116–119.

143 Andrei Belyi, “Prorok bezlichiiia,” *Simvolizm kak miroponimanie* by Andrei Belyi (Moskva: Respublika, 1994) 145–52.

144 See details in the next chapter.

According to Belyi, Riabushinskii was indifferent to the choice of title and accepted Sokolov's proposal.¹⁴⁵

The Cover Page: Visual Sources and Symbolism

The cover of the first issue of *The Golden Fleece* (Fig. 3.1.) and the advertising booklet featured an image of a mermaid with a forked tail and a candle in her hand; with erotic implication, she "invited" readers (primarily the male cultural elite) to experience the pleasure of this print craftsmanship. The Russian handwritten inscription *Zolotoe runo* and the French *La Toison d'Or* set off against a rectangular area of light grey, were gilded, shimmering against a grey background, and clearly demonstrated the material sumptuousness of the journal and related to the future Blue Rose group's preferred colours. The cover page was designed by an anonymous artist, identified in the table of contents only as "I**".

According to some contemporary speculation, the author was possibly either Bakst¹⁴⁶ or Lanceray.¹⁴⁷ In fact, the design of the first cover page could be attributed to any of the artists who participated in creating the first issue, even Riabushinskii himself, who engaged in the design of the first issue under the pseudonym Shinskii. According to the British Library cataloguing,¹⁴⁸ however, this work belongs to Nikolai Feofilaktov.¹⁴⁹ Feofilaktov designed the cover pages for *The Scales* and might have been commissioned by Riabushinskii and his editors, who were trying to compete with *The Scales*. By 1906, Feofilaktov, a self-taught artist, was a well-established graphic designer and artist at the Symbolist publishing house "The Scorpion". His first vignettes were printed in the *World of Art*, nos. 8–9, 1904. It seems quite strange, though, that the name of Feofilaktov, the "Moscow Beardsley",¹⁵⁰ did not appear in the table of contents, and was identified simply as I**. Indeed, this could be an intentional "mystification" on the part of the editorial board; perhaps the editorial team expected that the anonymous cover design would create an impression of "mystery" and originality.

145 Belyi, *Nachalo veka* 124.

146 Shadurskii 110.

147 Bowl, "Nikolay Ryabushinsky" 491.

148 See the image on the page of the British Library: *VADS. The Online Resource of Visual Arts. University of Exeter. Russian Visual Arts, 1800–1914*, 9 March, 2011<<http://www.vads.ac.uk/large.php?uid=50874>> No further information is provided.

149 About Feofilaktov see Mikhail Kiselev, "O tvorchestve N.P. Feofilaktova," *Iskusstvo* 8 (1976): 38–43.

150 Belyi, *Mezhdv dvukh revoliutsii*, 212.

Placing the mermaid on the cover page of a Modernist periodical appears appropriate in terms of International Modernism and can be interpreted from different perspectives: as a part of thematic discourse of Western European and Russian art of the late nineteenth century; as an interpretation of Slavic folklore and folk art traditions by contemporary artists; and as an effect of the Russian Arts and Crafts movement.

Late nineteenth-century Western European art employed folk themes of the supernatural. Depicting mermaids and sirens was one of these highly explored themes. For example, the images of mermaids by Arnold Böcklin (*Mermaids at Play*, 1886; *Calm Sea*, 1887), John Waterhouse (*A Mermaid*, 1900; *The Siren*, 1900), Edvard Munch (*Mermaid*, 1896), Gustave Moreau (*The Poet and Siren*, 1894) and others would have been known by the artist, who carried out the design of the cover for *The Golden Fleece*. Mermaids were also a subject for portrayal in the works of the Wanderers. Representations of mermaids can be seen in Ivan Kramskoi's (1887–1887) *Mermaids: According to the Plot of Gogol's Tale "May Night"* (1871), Konstantin Makovskii's (1839–1915) *Mermaids* (1879), and Repin's artwork *Sadko* (1876).

The images of traditional Slavic folk mermaids¹⁵¹ are usually anthropomorphic, while the portrayal of the mermaid on the cover page of *The Golden Fleece* is an amalgamation of human and fish. In fact, the representation of the mermaid with a fish tail (sometimes with double tails) can also be found in Slavic folklore, and this particular image of a mythical being was usually carved on frontal boards in vernacular architecture and tools.¹⁵² This kind of mermaid (*bereginya*, i.e. protectress) in folk beliefs was connected with both

151 According to D. Zelenin, in different regions of Eastern Europe, mermaids have different names – *rusavki*, *mavki*, *navki*, *vodianitsy*, *kupavki*, *kazytki*, *shutovki*, *khitki*, *loskotki*, etc. According to East Slavic folklore, mermaids are women (or sometimes men and children) who died an unnatural death ("*zalozhnaia smert'*"), committed suicide predominantly through drowning themselves in water, or those children who died unbaptized or were cursed by their parents. These mermaids live in swamps, lakes, rivers, fields or woods and act aggressively toward the living: they can tickle people to death; they hate women and seduce men, who cannot resist their beauty; and if they come to somebody's house, they settle discords between husband and wife. Mermaids were described as incredibly beautiful naked young women with very long loose blond (and sometimes green) hair, which they like to comb while sitting on the riverbanks. D.K. Zelenin, *Izbrannye trudy. Ocherki russkoi mifologii: Umershie neestestvennoi smert'iu i rusalki* (Moskva: Indrik, 1995) 141–232.

152 I express my sincere gratitude to Dr. Natalie Kononenko, who directed me toward examining Slavic woodcarvings with the images of mermaids.



FIGURE 3.7 Mikhail Vrubel'. Design for balalaika. Talashkino. Before 1905. Reproduced in the catalogue of Talashkino arts and crafts: Sergei Makovskii, *Talachkino. L'art décoratif des ateliers de la princesse Ténichev* (St. Petersburg: Sodrougestvo, 1906). Photograph.

COURTESY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA LIBRARY.

water and flax: the working ("combing") of flax was compared to the mermaid combing her hair.¹⁵³

The traditional East Slavic image of the mermaid (*rusalka*) was implemented in some designs reproduced in the catalogue of Talashkino's workshop published in 1906.¹⁵⁴ Thus, for example, the earlier designs by Vrubel' for a balalaika, made in Talashkino, with a painted mermaid were liberal interpretations of a mermaid in a traditional Russian headdress *kokoshnik* (Fig. 3.7). In one of the

153 Hilton, 144. In addition, Linda Ivanits suggests that this particular representation of the mythical creature, depicted with fish tails and carved on battledores and other household tools, which was called *bereginia* (from Russian *bereg* – bank, *bereginia* – female bank spirit), is often equated with *rusalka* (mermaid). She states that while "it is tempting to make this identification; there is no enough evidence to fully warrant it". See Linda Ivanits, *Russian Folk Belief* (Armonk, New York, and London: M.E. Sharpe, Inc., 1995) 78.

154 Sergei Makovskii, *Talachkino. L'art décoratif des ateliers de la princesse Ténichev* (St. Petersburg: Sodrougestvo, 1906).

versions, the mermaid looks out from the decoratively conventionalized water pond with a gesture that resembles a move from a traditional dance. Wavy, dynamic lines suggest a departure from the early national revival Modern Style visible in Abramtsevo designs and the growing influence of the International Art Nouveau ornamental motifs. In the second image, Aleksei Zinov'ev's (1880–1941)¹⁵⁵ woodcarving of the mermaid on the top of an armoire appears closer to the vernacular designs (Fig. 3.8). If her posture resembles the folkloric *bereginya* from the battledores, the decorative elements also suggest the implementation of Art Nouveau features, such as curvilinear elements signifying a water spume and underwater life. Such associations are grounded in the fact that Art Nouveau images and objects were gaining currency with Russia, as Princess Tenisheva eagerly promoted the tendency. She was a patron of Siegfried Bing's "Art Nouveau" store, where she bought different art pieces and works of Emile Gallé and Lucien Falize among them. She was among the first to bring their decorative art to Russia and show them to the public.¹⁵⁶

Besides folkloric narratives and representations of mermaids in West European and Russian art, the popularity of literary (mostly poetic) portrayals of mermaids is also of relevance. Aleksandr Pushkin, Mikhail Lermontov (1814–1841), and Nikolai Gogol' employed *rusalki* images in their works and influenced others. Pushkin's unfinished poetic drama *Mermaid* (*Rusalka*, 1829–32) became a basis for Aleksandr Dargomyzhskii's (1813–1869) opera staged in 1855. In 1885, Mamontov's private opera staged Dargomyzhskii's *Mermaid* (*Rusalka*) with decorations by Isaak Levitan, Vasilii Polenov, Korovin and Viktor Vasnetsov, and in 1897, Nikolai Rimskii-Korsakov's (1844–1908) *Sadko*. This folkloric figure also inspired the writers of the turn of the century. Bal'mont, Gippius, Gumilev, and Briusov all produced works devoted to mermaids and the underwater world.

The European infatuation with mermaids travelled to Russia with Hans Christian Andersen's fairytales, "The Little Mermaid" among them.¹⁵⁷ The first large anthology of Andersen's fairytales translated into Russian appeared in 1863; and in 1868, the second enlarged Russian edition with illustrations by

155 Aleksei Zinov'ev was a graduate from the Stroganov College of Arts in Moscow (*Stroganovskoe uchilishche iskusstv*). He worked for the Fabergé factories before he replaced Maliutin in Talashkino in 1903 (Tenisheva 208).

156 Larisa Zhuravleva 158.

157 I would like to express my gratitude to Dr. Svitlana Kryz, who mentioned the idea that Andersen and his "The Little Mermaid" might be among the possible references for the image of the mermaid on the cover page.



FIGURE 3.8 *Aleksei Zinov'ev. Woodcarving with the mermaid on the top of an armoir. Before 1905. Reproduced in the catalogue of Talashkino arts and crafts, Sergei Makovskii, Talachkino. L'art décoratif des ateliers de la princesse Ténichev (St. Petersburg: Sodrougestvo, 1906). Photograph.*

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Mikhail Klodt (1835–1914) was printed in Germany.¹⁵⁸ Benois, for example, considered “The Little Mermaid”, with its intertwining of different worlds, his favorite of Andersen’s fairytales.¹⁵⁹ In the 1880s and 1890s, people from different classes, and the tsarina Maria Fedorovna, the wife of Alexander III, among them, read his fairytales.¹⁶⁰

And finally, it is likely that Oscar Wilde’s short story about love between an earthly man and a mermaid, “Fisherman and his Soul”, was well known in Russia, especially among the Symbolists. Influenced by Andersen’s “The Little Mermaid”, it was written in 1888. Wilde was the unquestionable authority and a canonical figure for Russian Symbolists; he described his mermaid with hair “as a wet fleece of gold”. The designer of the cover and others associated with the journal might have known of Wilde’s tale that served as connection between mermaids and the “Golden Fleece” by implication.

The image of the mermaid on the cover of *The Golden Fleece*, then, functioning within this complex context, was a tribute to the preoccupation with mermaids in visual culture. Tinged with an erotic connotation and the mystery of the supernatural, the water-woman was probably meant to represent the hidden underwater perils that lie in wait for those seeking beauty; or, conversely, she represented the “soul” of the “pursuer of the Golden Fleece”. Was she a sister of a European siren with two fish tails that was an emblem of philosophical enlightenment, or an alchemist’s representation of the unity of earth and water or the power of transformation of mercury into gold? Or, representing a ship’s figurehead that embodied the ship’s spirit, she might enlighten the thorny path of the “pursuers of the Golden Fleece” and show them the real treasures – symbols – hidden deeply in the subconscious that just needed to be discovered and rendered in various art forms and genres.

If the sea-maid is a siren, then she sings to attract the “pursuers of the Golden Fleece” and represents sexual desire and doom. Whether a hunter for a human soul, a singing seductive *femme fatale*, or rescuer of a ship, her image was meant to intensify interest in the upcoming periodical, appeal to the cultural elite and encourage subscriptions. The mermaid, however, appeared only on the advertising prospectus and on the cover of the first issue; the second number came

158 L. Yu. Braude, “Hans Christian Andersen and Russia,” *Scandinavica: An International Journal of Scandinavian Studies* 14.1 (May 1975): 2–6.

159 Benua, *Moi vospominaniia*, vol. 1, 230.

160 In 1887, Ivan Sytin, who was one of the first-rate Russian publishers at the time, published “The Little Mermaid” in his own liberal translation; moreover, during the next 15 years, Sytin’s publishing house issued 54 collections of Andersen’s tales. See L. Zvonareva and L. Kudriavtseva, *H.C. Andersen i russkie illiustratory: al'bom-entsiklopediia. Illiustratory Kh.K. Andersena v Rossii i russkom zarubezh'e za poltora veka, 1868–2005* (Moskva: Arbor, 2005) 10–28.

out with a new cover designed by Lanceray and printed on the bold red paper (Fig. 3.9). The new design preserved the gilded inscription of the title, but in place of the erotic image of the mermaid, the drawing at the centre referred more directly to the title: elegantly framed in an Art Nouveau border was the Argo and below it the "hidden treasure" of the Golden Fleece (which appears to have been already "found" by its "pursuers").¹⁶¹

The Art Reproductions

The Golden Fleece did not insert art reproductions in the layout of the text. It followed the standards established by later issues of the *World of Art* and reproduced artworks separately from the text, at the very beginning of each issue.

Consistent with the editorial statement, which announced art as a foremost value, the Art Section opened the periodical with a set of nineteen high-quality reproductions printed on enameled paper imported from abroad. The black-and-white phototypes and four colourful autotypes were covered with the finest thin silk ornamented paper to prevent the pages from sticking together and damaging the reproductions. The *World of Art* also covered its most expensive inset reproductions and original lithographs or etchings, which were designed to be removed for framing and appeared in the middle of the issue; however, the paper quality was lower. *The Golden Fleece* emphasized the importance of art reproduction and implied that the art periodical's foremost task was to supply the subscriber with contemporary as well as other rare art works that were unavailable in fine edition books: neither Vasnetsov, nor Vrubel's artwork (as well as many other contemporaries) were reproduced in fine editions during their lifetime.

The reproductions section represented selections of eighteen recent art pieces of Mikhail Vrubel,¹⁶² the key artist featured in the first issue, and one art work by Valentin Serov, which was the portrait of Konstantin Bal'mont, a Symbolist poet, whose works were published in the first issue, and who was highly esteemed by

161 *The Golden Fleece* would change covers regularly; very soon the Symbolists, Anatolii Arapov, Sergei Sudeikin, Pavel Kuznetsov and other would design their covers with more idiosyncratic design elements and "obscure" symbols. In 1908 and 1909, the last years of publication, the journal would change its vision dramatically regarding cover design: *The Golden Fleece* would become smaller in size and its cover would be a consistent reprinting of the same Lanceray's design of Argo with an image of a naked Hamlet holding the scull next to Art Nouveau symmetrical column-like ornaments with masks.

162 About Mikhail Vrubel' see: N.A. Dmitrieva, *Mikhail Aleksandrovich Vrubel'* (Leningrad: Khudozhnik RSFSR, 1990); Iu. Gombberg-Verzhbinskaia, N. Podkopaeva and Iu.V. Novikov, eds. and comps., *Vrubel'. Perepiska. Vospominaniia o khudozhnike* (Leningrad: Iskustvo, 1976); Aline Isdebsky-Pritchard, *The Art of Mikhail Vrubel (1856–1910)* (Ann-Arbor: UMI Research Press, 1982).

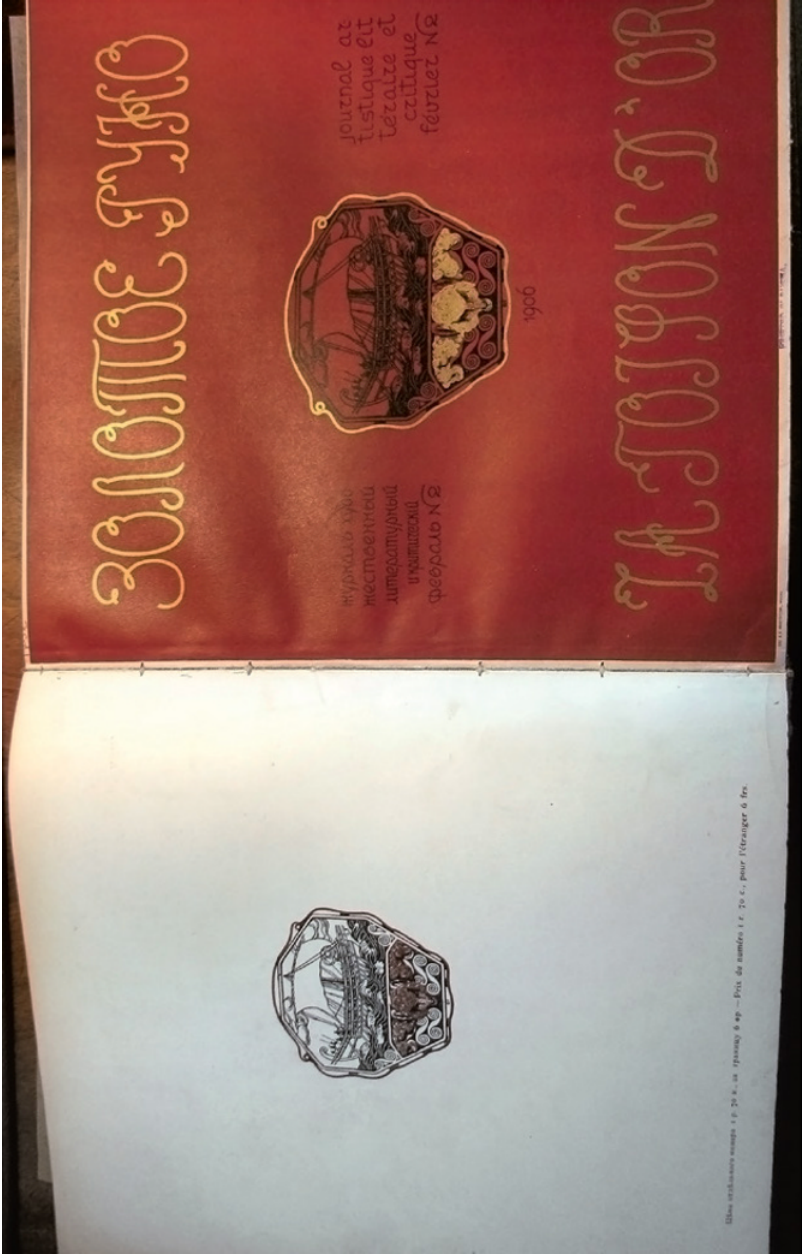


FIGURE 3.9 Eugene Lanceray. Cover page of The Golden Fleece (Zolotoe runo), no. 2, 1906. COURTESY OF THE FRICK ART REFERENCE LIBRARY.

Riabushinskii (his intention was to reproduce the portraits of the best contemporary Russian poets in every issue). Vrubel's works included his self-portrait, the portrait of his wife Nadezhda Zabela-Vrubel' (1868–1913), his illustrations to Pushkin's poem "Prophet" and his most recent sketches and drawings were among the reproductions. *The Golden Fleece* also reproduced a bucolic panel *Day (Den')*, which had been destroyed by the artist himself, and thereby emphasized the importance of reproducing artworks for subsequent generations. The fact of destruction was mentioned parenthetically in the title and implied that a photographic copy of the original "prevents" damaged art pieces from being completely forgotten and that art journals can serve as "repositories" of such lost artists' creations.

Vrubel's art was becoming increasingly important within Russia's art milieu. He exhibited with the World of Art group since its beginnings, but belonged to the same generation as Vasnetsov, whose art was promoted by the *World of Art*; he also completed a course in the Academy of Arts in St Petersburg as an auditor student in 1880–1884. Like Vasnetsov, Vrubel' was influenced by Repin and Pavel Chistiakov (1832–1919), the devoted Academic painter and professor of the Academy.

In fact, Vasnetsov and Vrubel' had much more in common than it seems at first sight, especially in terms of their decorative experiments with rendition of forms, the formal Academy education they both had, and the parallel interests in Russian folklore and Biblical themes they both explored in their art works. Vasnetsov, however, never shared Vrubel's artistic interest in "supernatural mystical duality" expressed in the production of countless images of Demons and Seraphs.¹⁶³ A follower of Realism in his early artworks, Vrubel' changed his attitude toward art after 1885, creating his first sketches for *Seated Demon (Demon sidiashchii)*, and in the 1890s joined Abramtsevo circle.¹⁶⁴ Vrubel's

163 See the details about Demonic art of Vrubel' in Patricia Brodsky, "The Demons of Lermontov and Vrubel'," *Slavic and East European Arts* 6.2 (1990): 16–32; Kristi Groberg, "'The Shade of Lucifer's Dark Wing': Satanism in Silver Age Russia," *The Occult in Russian and Soviet Culture*, ed. Bernice Glatzer Rosenthal (Ithaca & London: Cornell UP, 1997) 99–133; Mary Laurita, "The Vrubel' – Demon Entanglement: The Creation of a Symbolist Myth," *The Silver Age: Russian Literature and Culture 1881–1921* 2 (1999): 1–23; I. Primochkina, "Demon Bloka i demon Vrubelia: K probleme izobrazitel'nogo analiza proizvedeniia slovesnogo i izobrazitel'nogo iskusstva," *Voprosy literatury* 4 (1986): 151–171; Avril Pyman, "The Demon. The Mythopoetic World Model in the Art of Lermontov, Vrubel, Blok," *Russian Literature and Its Demons*, ed. Pamela Davidson (NY & Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2000) pp. 333–370; P. Suzdalev, *Vrubel' i Lermontov* (Moscow: Izobrazitel'noe iskusstvo, 1980); Tomas Venclova, "K demonologii russkogo simvolizma," *Christianity and The Eastern Slavs: Russian Literature in Modern Times*, ed. Boris Gasparov, Robert P. Hughes, Irina Paperno, and Olga Raevsky-Hudges (Berkley, Los Angeles, London: University of California Press, 1993).

164 Gomberg-Verzhbinskaia, Podkopaeva and Novikov 5–9.

designs made in Abramtsevo featured the Style Modern visual rhetorics. His later works expressed Symbolist discourse, bright decorativeness and devotion to folklore, which were not easily accepted by his contemporaries.

The *World of Art* occasionally reproduced Vrubel's sculptures and designs from Abramtsevo. The nos. 2–3, 1901 was devoted to Vrubel' and reproduced his paintings including *Pan* (1899), *Princess-Swan* (*Tsarevna-Lebed'*, 1900) and his works on paper. This issue also featured Stepan Iaremich's¹⁶⁵ short article about the artist and his artistic biography.¹⁶⁶ In 1903, Iaremich published another article about Vrubel', which was devoted to his frescos in the Kirillovskia Church in Kiev (Kyiv).¹⁶⁷

It is often, however, mentioned that the World of Art artists underestimated Vrubel' and his talent. Thus, in his memoirs Benois witnessed that all the World of Art members, including Diaghilev, were disappointed by Vrubel's art shown in the exhibit of Russian and Finnish Artists in 1898,¹⁶⁸ and in 1902, Benois considered Vrubel's art "truly poetic" but too eccentric.¹⁶⁹ However in 1906, in Diaghilev's *Salon d'Automne* in Paris (which occurred only a few months after the launch of *The Golden Fleece*), Vrubel's art works would be shown as a highlight of the exhibit. According to the memoirs of the Symbolist artist and *The Golden Fleece's* participant Sergei Sudeikin, the French did not appreciate Vrubel's art except for one person who spent hours in front of Vrubel's works. Sudeikin wrote: "It was Picasso. [Mikhail] Larionov¹⁷⁰ and I consider that the grounds of Cubism, Constructivism and Surrealism were set up by Vrubel'".¹⁷¹

The Symbolists, who recognized Vrubel' as forerunner, appreciated his experiments much more than the World of Art artists did. They deemed the artist a genius and worshipped him. Therefore, reproduction of Vrubel's last artworks in *The Golden Fleece* signaled the importance of his art for the young generation of artists and stressed the new journal's recognition of his authority and achievements.¹⁷² In making this visual statement, it seems that the editorial

165 Stepan Iaremich (1869–1939) was a member of the World of Art and Vrubel's student.

166 Stepan Iaremich, "M.A. Vrubel'," *Mir Iskusstva* 2–3 (1901): 124–125.

167 Stepan Iaremich, "Freski Vrubelia v Kirillovskoi tserkvi v Kieve (1884–1885)," *Mir Iskusstva* 9–10 (1903): 188–190.

168 Benua, *Moi vospominaniia* vol. 2, 190.

169 Aleksandr Benua, *Istoriia russkoi zhivopisi v XIX veke* (Moskva: Respublika, 1998) 408–409.

170 Mikhail Larionov (1881–1964) was Cubo-Futurist and Primitivist artist, who invented Rayonism (*luchizm*).

171 Sergei Sudeikin, "Dve vstrechi s Vrubelem," in Gomberg-Verzhbinskaia, Podkopaeva and Novikov 295.

172 When the first issue of the journal came off the press, Vrubel' received a telegram from the editorial board of *The Golden Fleece*: "Celebrating publishing of the first issue of

board was emulating the *World of Art*, which had proclaimed Vasnetsov's art to be a milestone in the development of Russian art of the turn of the century. Similar to the *World of Art*, which did not publish an article about Vasnetsov, *The Golden Fleece's* the eloquent visual statement was not supported by any textual commentary forcing the reader to make his or her conclusions based on the visual only.

The World of Art in The Golden Fleece: Graphic Design and Illustration

The first issue of *The Golden Fleece* represented an experiment in illustration. It united both the *World of Art's* artists and young Symbolist graphic designers. Riabushinskii wanted to create a journal that would be a continuation of the *World of Art*; therefore he commissioned Bakst, Lanceray and Dobuzhinskii, the *World of Art's* graphic designers, to build a visual link with *The Golden Fleece's* predecessor. Their Art Nouveau designs echoed the *World of Art* graphics and sometimes represented the Mallarméan concept of "parallel text"¹⁷³ discussed in the previous chapter or, more often, appeared as artists' commentaries on the texts. They also showed a "rationality" and Apollonian clarity that foreshadowed the appearance of *Apollo* in just few years; this is in contrast to the Dionysian disturbance of the designs of the younger generation of Symbolist artists.

Bakst, the oldest and the most experienced among other designers, created only one work for *The Golden Fleece*, the title vignette for Merezhkovskii's¹⁷⁴

The Golden Fleece, we drink to your health. Riabushinskii, Briusov, Belyi, Grabar', Milioti, Vinogradov, Kuznetsov, Feofilaktov, Vorotnikov, Petrovskaja, Tarovaty'. See "Pis'ma M.A. Vrubeliu", in Gomberg-Verzhbinkaia, Podkopaeva and Novikov 112.

173 This concept is discussed in Chapter 2.

174 At the time, Merezhkovskii, who also published an article in the criticism section, was already considered a living classic of the Russian Symbolist movement. By 1906, Merezhkovskii had already published his famous groundbreaking and controversial trilogy *Christ and Antichrist (Khristos i antichrist): Death of Gods: Julian the Apostate (Smert' bogov: Iulian otstupnik)* was brought out in 1896, *Resurrected Gods: Leonardo da Vinci (Voskresshie bogi: Leonardo da Vinchi)* in 1900, and *Antichrist: Peter and Alexei (Antikhris: Petr i Aleksei)* in 1904. In terms of the discussion appearing in the next chapter, is it worth mentioning that all three parts were devoted to Antiquity: the first part talked about Antiquity challenged by Christianity, the second part contained consistent references to the "renaissance" of Classical art in Renaissance Italy and the last part was concerned with Westernization and the encounters of Medieval Russia with Greco-Roman Antiquity during Peter the Great's rule. Merezhkovskii was an extremely fruitful and encyclopaedically educated author. He was perhaps the only Russian Symbolist whose full collection of works was published in his lifetime: 24 volumes were issued in 1914 by Ivan Sytin's

autobiographical poem “The Olden Octaves” (“Starinnye oktavy”) (Fig. 3.10).¹⁷⁵ It was a symmetrical composition that resembled a theatrical stage. In the centre of the stage was a cupid with a flute portrayed against a theatrical backdrop and a variation of Doric columns on the sides. Classical themes, symmetrical compositions, and theatrical motifs were quite usual for Bakst’s graphic designs of this time. His design in this way was a “parallel text” to Merezhkovskii’s Classical allusions.

Dobuzhinskii was responsible for three designs that appeared in the first issue. No other periodical established the visual links that referred to the publisher, but *The Golden Fleece* did. Riabushinskii’s lifestyle and his personality were probably expressed in the ornate design of the table of contents, created by Dobuzhinskii (Fig. 3.11). It showed a luxurious boudoir with ornamented Rococo-like garlands wound around two cornucopias. The cornucopias were filled with objects that referred to the publisher: the image of a journal on the right and on the left a silhouette profile of a man in a frame, most likely Casanova (Riabushinskii had the reputation of a womanizer). The central piece of the design was a lyre, a symbol of Apollo, and an Ancient Greek grotesque theatrical mask, symbolizing Riabushinskii’s adherence to art. *The Golden Fleece* was probably meant to reflect the publisher’s artistic character expressed in luxurious art form.

Dobuzhinskii also created a title page and the frontispiece for the *Art Chronicle* (Fig. 3.12).¹⁷⁶ His design, which was very different in its conceptualization from the table of contents, corresponded to the general notion of the “Golden Fleece” and its reference to Greek mythology. The frontispiece represented a pen-and-ink drawing of a Greek-like temple with clear, yet idiosyncratic, allusions to Greek Archaism. The façade of the temple with its unusual columns (Dobuzhinskii may well simply have invented their non-tapering shape) and the locked door possibly referred to clandestine treasures hidden within. The image was placed in the centre of the page with empty space around it; the areas of flat, unmodulated surface, created by the façade, connected the image to the surrounding space of the frame. The contrast between this simplicity and more detailed areas including the foliage in the foreground created

publishing house. His novels were translated into other European languages and in the same year the collection of his works was published, he was nominated for the Nobel Prize in literature. He was nominated for this prestigious award for nine times (the last nomination was in 1930), but never received it. See Abram Blokh, “Nobelevskie neudachniki: ot Merezhkovskogo do Leonova,” *Balkan Rustics* 19.06.2006, 14 April, 2009. <<http://www.russian.slavica.org/printout2654.html>>.

175 Dmitrii Merezhkovskii, “Starinnye oktavy,” *Zolotoe Runo* 1 (1906): 31–37. The poem was continued in the next issues.

176 Dobuzhinskii and Bakst are discussed further in the following chapter.

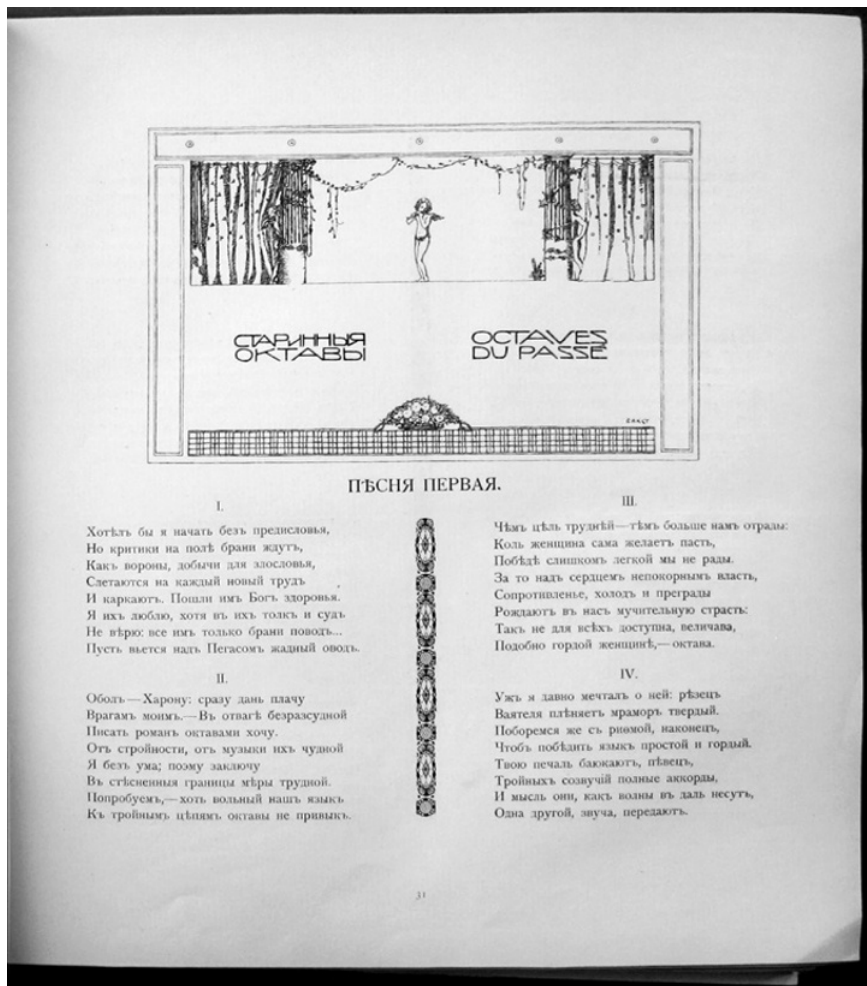


FIGURE 3.10 Title page for Dmitrii Merezhkovskii's poem *Olden Octaves* (*Starinnye oktavy*) in *The Golden Fleece* (*Zolotoe runo*), no. 1, 1906, with Léon Bakst's vignette and Mstislav Dobuzhinskii's dividing rule.

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a stylized composition relating it to Art Nouveau sensibility. The composite title, printed with the same ink on the adjacent page, was symmetrically embellished with spirals that resembled the motifs of the decorative art of Archaic Greece. References to Ancient Greece and Archaism would be one of the main points in the next art periodical to be discussed, *Apollo*, in which Bakst, the designer of the title page of this journal would also represent the entrance to the periodical as an entrance to the temple. Dobuzhinskii's image of the temple present in *The Golden Fleece* presaged the ideology of Apollonianism and

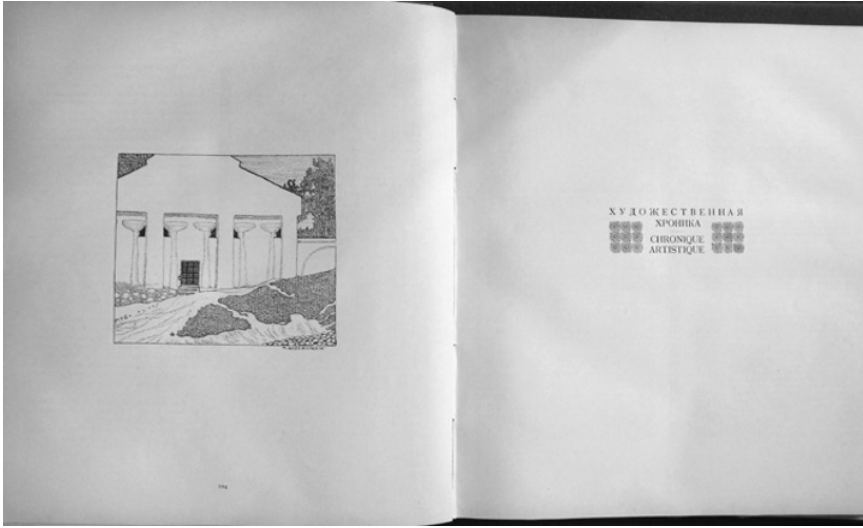


FIGURE 3.12 Mstislav Dobuzhinskii. Frontispiece and title for the *Art Chronicle*. The Golden Fleece (*Zolotoe runo*), no. 1, 1906.

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"The Necklace" ("Ozherel'e").¹⁷⁸ In the first poem, "Dragonite" ("Drakonit"), Bal'mont referred to a gemstone (a quartz crystal) and employed the symbolism of an amulet, while dragon and serpent motifs were associated with the notion of vengeance. The poem was addressed to a dragon-fighter, who was determined to kill the dragon in order to obtain an amulet. Lanceray's graphic designs – swords, darkness and the imagery of knights – explicitly expressed masculinity and belligerence shown in the poem. Lanceray offered a visual interpretation of Bal'mont's motifs (Fig. 3.13). He followed the text and created a close commentary to the verses.

Blok's poem "Being in Love" continued the theme of medievalism begun by Bal'mont's poem "Dragonite" and was decorated with another vignette by Lanceray (Fig. 3.14, on the right). His work with its symmetrical composition, with roses and thorns elaborately intertwined, reflected the text, which was devoted to

by Riabushinskii, and one whom he sometimes emulated. About Bal'mont see D.G. Makogonenko, "K.D. Bal'mont. Zhizn' i sud'ba," *Konstantin Bal'mont. Izbrannoe*, ed. D.G. Makogonenko (Moskva: Izdatel'stvo Pravda, 1990) 5–20; Robert Bird, "Konstantin Dmitrievich Bal'mont (3 June 1867–1924, December 1942)," *Russian Writers of the Silver Age, 1890–1925*, ed. Judith E. Kalb, J. Alexander Ogden, and I.G. Vishnevetsky. *Dictionary of Literary Biography*, vol. 295 (Detroit: Gale, 2004) 54–62.

178 Konstantin Bal'mont, "Ozherel'e," *Zolotoe Runo* 1 (1906): 38–41.

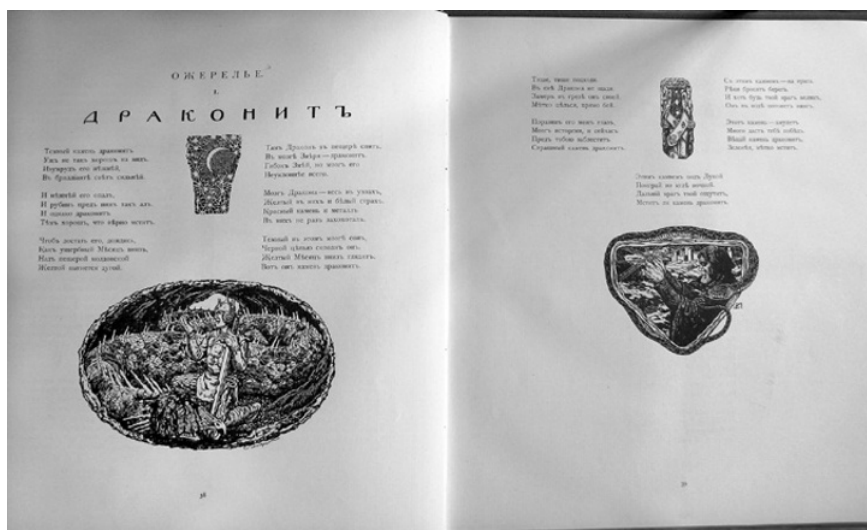


FIGURE 3.13 Konstantin Bal'mont's poem "Dragonite" ("Drakonit") with Eugene Lanceray's graphic design. *The Golden Fleece (Zolotoe runo)*, no. 1, 1906. COURTESY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS AT URBANA-CHAMPAIGN LIBRARY.

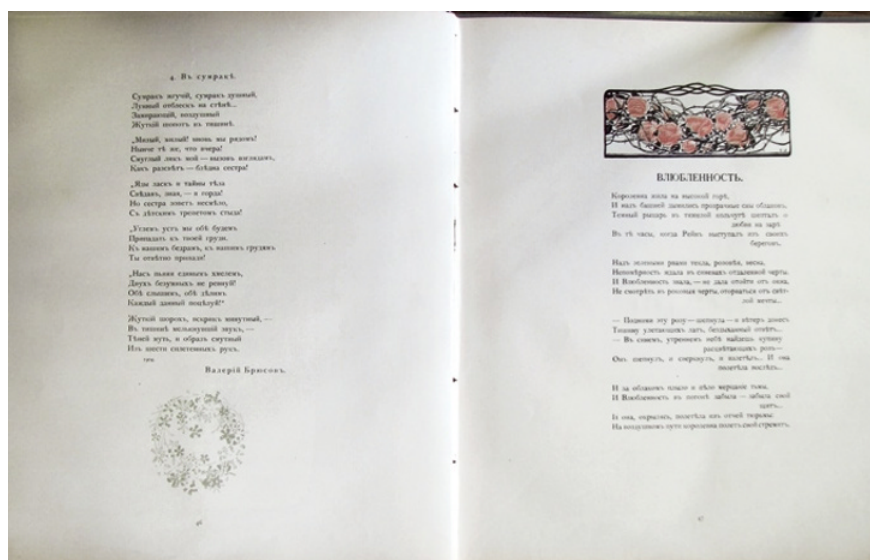


FIGURE 3.14 *The Golden Fleece (Zolotoe runo)*, no. 1, 1906 with Nikolai Sapunov's vignette for Valerii Briusov's poem "In Twilight" ("V sumrake") and Eugene Lanceray's title vignette for Aleksandr Blok's poem "Being in Love" ("Vliublennost"), on the right. COURTESY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS AT URBANA-CHAMPAIGN LIBRARY.

knighthood and chivalry. The motif of the rose was explored in the text and was eloquently repeated as a visual component. The rose motif recurred numerous times and seemed drawn from the designers' inspiration from Art Nouveau.

Lanceray also created the idiosyncratic end piece (Fig. 3.3) for Bal'mont's retelling of *Popol Vuh*, the creation story of the Maya.¹⁷⁹ *The Golden Fleece* featured not only the most popular and newest literature, but included translations from the Ancient Mexican epos, which was an absolute *terra incognita* for Russians. Richardson asserts that Bal'mont was the first translator of Mexican mythology into Russian.¹⁸⁰ It is useful to see *Popol Vuh* in the context of the Ancient Greek symbolism employed in the journal's title and the perception of the Ancient Americas by the Europeans and Russians. Drawing parallels between the mythology of the "Golden Fleece" and the unexplored civilizations of the Ancient Americas seemed appropriate in terms of thematic links between the "Golden Fleece" and El Dorado (the Golden One) mythology and as an overarching concern, a preoccupation with ancient civilizations.

For the European mind, El Dorado, a mythical place that was postulated to exist in varying places across Latin America, had similarities to the Argonauts' quest for unattainable treasure. As Jean-Pierre Sanchez claims, "the Europeans could only view the New World through the filter of their own civilization. They adapted the new reality to the intellectual and psychological schemas with which they were familiar, thus making use (consciously or not) of the 'mental equipment' inherited from Western Europe".¹⁸¹ The Russians, who accepted the Western European meaning of both myths, might have associated the Mayan myth with the same type of Ancient mythology.

The end piece for the article, designed by Lanceray, represented the head of the Egyptian Pharaoh against a starry night background (Fig. 3.3). In the European imagination of the turn of the century, the unknown Mayan culture and better-known Ancient Egypt were closely connected and were understood as allied cultures. Since the Enlightenment, the European traveler to Mexico tended to "Egyptianize" the monuments found in the Yucatan,¹⁸² while the late-nineteenth-century European perception of Mayan civilization was connected with ancient Greek heritage.¹⁸³ Unsurprisingly, Russian perceptions of the Maya were also

179 Konstantin Bal'mont, "Chelovecheskaia povest' kvichei-maiev," *Zolotoe runo* 1 (1906): 78–89.

180 William Richardson, *Mexico through Russian Eyes, 1806–1940* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1988) 85.

181 Sanchez 369.

182 R. Tripp Evans, *Romancing the Mayas: Mexican Antiquity in the American Imagination 1820–1915* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2004) 37–44. I express my gratitude to Dr. M. Elizabeth (Betsy) Boone, who pointed me to this source.

183 See Chapter 4 in Evans 103–125.

influenced by Old World traditions that came from Western Europe. In his reference to the temple sacrifices in *Calls of the Ancient: Hymns, Songs and Intentions* (*Zovy drevnosti: Gimny, pesni i zamysly drevnikh*, 1908), Bal'mont himself would compare and contrast Mexican mythology with Egyptian: "If Egypt is illuminated by the golden, soft-yellow Sun, Mexico is illuminated completely by the glow of a crimson Sun. In its hymns you hear only the song of blood".¹⁸⁴

The *World of Art* artists created designs that commented on the meaning of the texts they illustrated. Their rational, Apollonian approach, however, was intermingled with irrational Symbolist images that suggested Dionysian themes and also represented the Mallarméan concept of "parallel text" that accompanied the words.

Symbolist Illustration

The Symbolists' approach to illustration evoked Diaghilev's idea of "individuality" that echoed European Symbolist theories more explicitly. *The Golden Fleece*'s graphic designs for poetry and prose epitomized "a hybrid synthesis"¹⁸⁵ of words and images. From the theoretical perspective, this "synthetic" aesthetic vision was expressed in Blok's essay "Colours and Words" ("Kraski i slova"), published in the same issue of *The Golden Fleece*.¹⁸⁶ Blok, a regular contributor to the journal and participant of the literature department,¹⁸⁷ advocated a rapprochement of poetry and the visual arts and explained some aspects of "synesthesia".

In "Colours and Words", Blok asserted, "painting teaches us to look and see" and "preserves child-like feelings, vivid and untouched".¹⁸⁸ In children's perception, the image plays a primary role and dominates the word:

The action of colour and light is emancipatory. It produces beautiful thoughts. If the reserved and well-bred European were to appear in a country where the landscape was beautiful, and the country dwellers, naked savages, danced freely under the sun, he would also have to be free and start dancing, if he was still alive.¹⁸⁹

By analogy, Blok emphasized, poets should escape from theoretical thinking and come closer to nature. Painting is closer to nature than poetry, and poets

184 Qtd. in Richardson, *Mexico through Russian Eyes* 87.

185 Simpson 151.

186 Aleksandr Blok, "Kraski i slova," *Zolotoe runo* 1 (1906): 98–103.

187 Lavrov, "Zolotoe runo" 164.

188 Blok 99.

189 Blok 101.

have to learn the childish spontaneity of painting and its use of colours. That would help them articulate more concrete meanings and "express the primeval origin".¹⁹⁰

The Golden Fleece represented an amalgamation of the Symbolist (Mallarméan) idea of illustration as a "parallel text" and Blok's conception of "childlike" looking. If Bakst, Lanceray and Dobuzhinskii embodied Petersburgian Apollonian clarity and "rationality", the Moscow-based Feofilaktov, Sapunov, Masiutin and Riabushinskii, the editor-in-chief, who created vignettes to the journal, – the younger Symbolists – were representatives of the "irrational" Dionysian mode, which was expressed in dreamlike objects and ambiguity of visual messages. Indeed, although the younger generation was significantly influenced by the *World of Art's* graphics, they were able to express their originality in *The Golden Fleece*. The complexity of the verbal texts written by the Symbolists was paralleled by the intricacy and ambiguity of the visual messages. *The Golden Fleece* became synonymous with experimentation to a greater degree than its predecessor, the *World of Art*, and, as will be shown, its successor, *Apollo*.

While Feofilaktov and Sapunov already participated in *The Scales*, Riabushinskii and Masiutin were much less experienced as artists and graphic designers. Feofilaktov, who likely designed the cover, as mentioned above, was commissioned to draw illustrations and several vignettes. His works demonstrated a "parallel text" which was visually expressed in his illustration to Briusov's poem (Fig. 3.15) devoted to Vrubel'.¹⁹¹ The poem gave the impression of being a posthumous dedication to the artist; however, it was written five years before Vrubel's death.¹⁹² The graphic design for Briusov's poem was

190 Blok 100.

191 Identifying the designers of the first pages is quite difficult due to lack of sufficient information. The names of the artists and the pages with their designs are stated in the table of contents; however, the numbers of the first beginning pages are not identified in the entire circulation. Also some pages may have been lost during binding, as usually happened.

192 Vrubel' spent his last years in a clinic because of a serious mental illness, which, according to Kristi Groberg, was brought about by tertiary syphilis and probably the abuse of narcotics and alcohol. See Groberg, 128. The story of creation of this poem is described in Briusov's memoirs. He met the ill artist in the clinic for the first time, when Riabushinskii decided to reproduce the portraits of contemporary Russian poets and writers in *The Golden Fleece*, which had already been conceived. According to Riabushinskii's idea, Vrubel' was commissioned to draw Briusov's portrait. The famous drawing was never finished, but instead, Briusov wrote a poem devoted to Vrubel's dying genius. Briusov's impression of his meeting with Vrubel' in 1905, when the artist lived in Doctor Usol'tsev's clinic for mentally ill people, was ambiguous. The iconic figure for all Russian Modernists

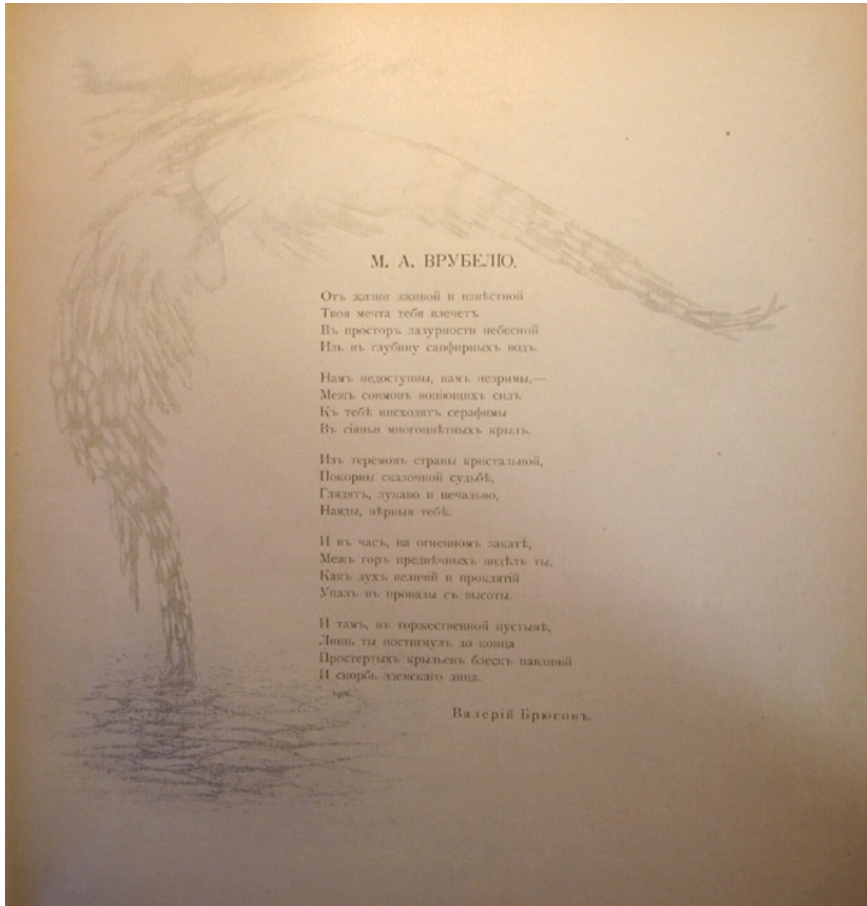


FIGURE 3.15 *Nikolai Feofilaktov. Illustration for Valerii Briusov's poem "For M.A. Vrubel". The Golden Fleece no. 1, 1906. Silver and purple metallic ink. COURTESY OF THE FRICK ART REFERENCE LIBRARY.*

appeared ingenious and insane at the same time. The poet recalled: "In all Vrubel's movements his insanity was apparent; however, if he took a pencil or charcoal, his hand acquired extraordinary confidence and certainty. Every line he drew was faultless. Creative energy outlasted the human being. The human was dying and ruining, but the master still lived" (Valerii Briusov, "Posledniaia rabota Vrubelia," *Iu. Gomborg-Verzhbinskaia*, N. Podkopaeva and Iu.V. Novikov, 297). Soon after this first meeting with Briusov, Vrubel's eyesight would fail. Nina Petrovskaja wrote in her memoirs that she and Briusov wanted to destroy the portrait – to cut it into pieces with a knife. Fortunately their intention was not realized and the portrait is now in the State Tretyakov Gallery in Moscow. See Nina Petrovskaja, "Iz 'Vospominanii,'" *Literaturnoe nasledstvo. Valerii Briusov*, ed. V. G. Bazanov, et al. (Moskva: Nauka: 1976) 784.

rendered in light greyish metallic ink: *The Golden Fleece* experimented with ink much more than its predecessor. The drawing represented a very light sparkling depiction of two wings, which referred to the images of Demons and Seraphs from Vrubel's art. The silver wings were touching a shimmering purple surface, which resembled water. Quite possibly, the dream-like image of wings was meant to symbolically represent Vrubel'-the-artist as his *Demon Downcast* or one of his Seraphs. The connection with Vrubel's art was obvious: the reproductions section began with a colour autotype¹⁹³ of Vrubel's recent drawing of a winged figure of Seraph. Wings were also present in Vrubel's illustration to Pushkin's poem "The Prophet" ("Prorok"),¹⁹⁴ reproduced in the journal. In general, wings appeared in Vrubel's art works very often. Feofilaktov's illustration referred both to the artist's artworks and to Bruisov's verses, which mentioned "peacock glitter of stretched wings" ("*prostertykh kryl'ev blesk pavlinii*"),¹⁹⁵ and symbolized Vrubel's genius. It seems, however, that both the poem and Feofilaktov's image of wings alluded to Vrubel' as a mentally ill artist, who "lost" his "wings" and the further opportunity to create.

Two of Feofilaktov's title vignettes to Fedor Sologub's "Calling for Beast" ("Prizyvaiushchii zveria")¹⁹⁶ (Fig. 3.16) and Andrei Belyi's excerpt from his so-called "mystery" (*misteriia*), "Trap of Night" ("Past' nochi"),¹⁹⁷ (Fig. 3.17) represented graceful Art Nouveau decorative friezes, which invigorated the tops of the pages and, it seems, "aestheticized" both narratives. The short story by Symbolist Sologub had homosexual connotations with the beast symbolizing a "distortion" of the male body. The brutality of the plot was packaged in a "parallel text" of an elegant Art Nouveau art object depicting peacock feathers in a whirlwind (or ocean waves) (Fig. 3.16). Here the decorative obtains independence from text and suggests its own turbulence and complexity in contrast to Sologub's pessimistic narrative.

Similarly, Belyi's excerpt from "Trap of Night", which expressed an apocalyptic vision of the end of the world, was embellished with Feofilaktov's Rococo-like intricate design, with flowers and the image of a cupid in the left corner and a vase in the right (Fig. 3.17). Both vignettes created illusion of lightness and airy gracefulness in contrast to severe textual meanings that described the end of the world, and to a certain extent referred to Somov's earlier vignettes.

193 Autotype is a printing process in which the metal plate is coated with a light-sensitive resin instead of gelatin (Allen 14).

194 This art reproduction was intended for framing, so it is missing in *The Golden Fleece* preserved in the Slavic Library at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

195 Valerii Briusov, "M.A. Vrubelii," *Zolotoe runo* 1 (1906): 3.

196 Fedor Sologub, "Calling for Beast," *Zolotoe runo* 1 (1906): 53–61.

197 Andrei Belyi, "Past' nochi," *Zolotoe runo* 1 (1906): 62–71.

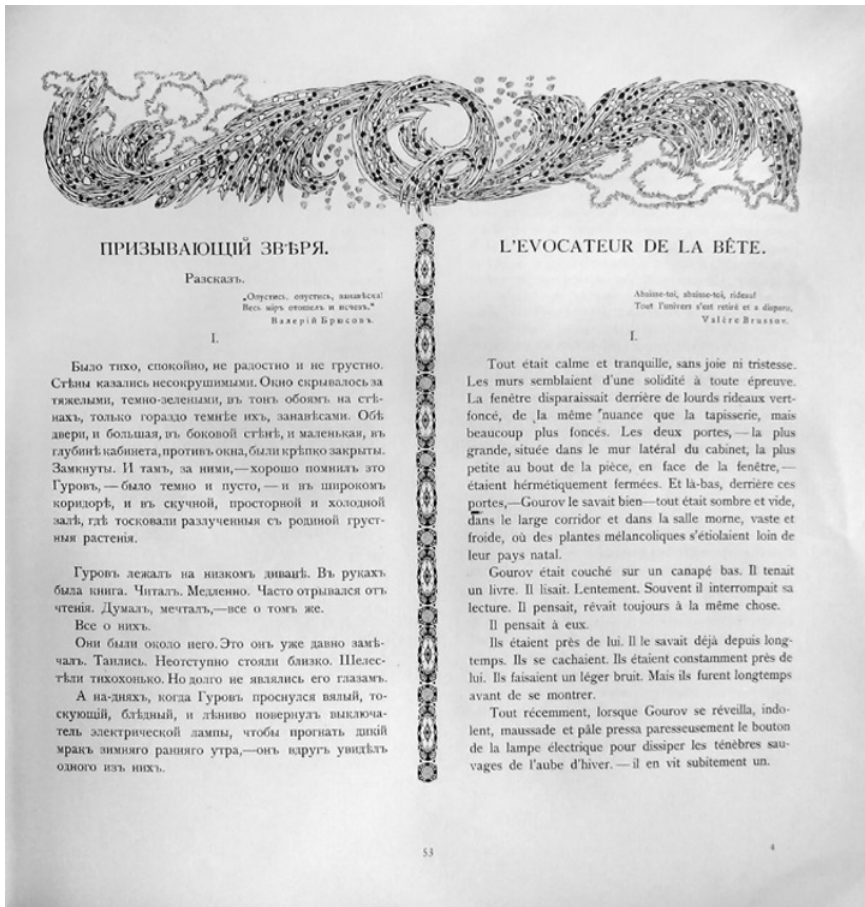


FIGURE 3.16 Nikolai Feofilaktov. Vignette for Fedor Sologub's story "Calling for Beast" ("Prizyvaiushchii zveria"). The Golden Fleece (Zolotoe runo), no. 1, 1906. COURTESY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS AT URBANA-CHAMPAIGN LIBRARY.

It seems that Somov's Rococo-inspired graphic designs in the *World of Art* influenced Feofilaktov, who, like his predecessor and contemporary Somov, was unconstrained by text.

It is quite possible that Feofilaktov designed the dropped capitals¹⁹⁸ for the section of Art Criticism and Critical-Philosophical Articles (*Khudozhestvennaia*

198 The designer of the dropped capital is not identified. It is also possible that the editorial used the templates from some earlier editions as the *World of Art* sometimes did.



FIGURE 3.17 *Nikolai Feofilaktov. Vignette to Andrei Belyi's mystery "Trap of Night" ("Past' noch") in The Golden Fleece (Zolotoe runo), no. 1, 1906.*

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kritika i kritiko-filosofskie stat'i). Every article began with a dropped capital letter for both the French and Russian parts of the text. The dropped capitals represented clearly silhouetted letters placed against of an almost indistinguishable dream-like landscape background, female nude or boat rendered in a very light stippled manner (for example, Fig. 3.18).

Another Feofilaktov's design was an end piece for Bal'mont's travelogue about his impressions of North America ("A Couple of Words about America"

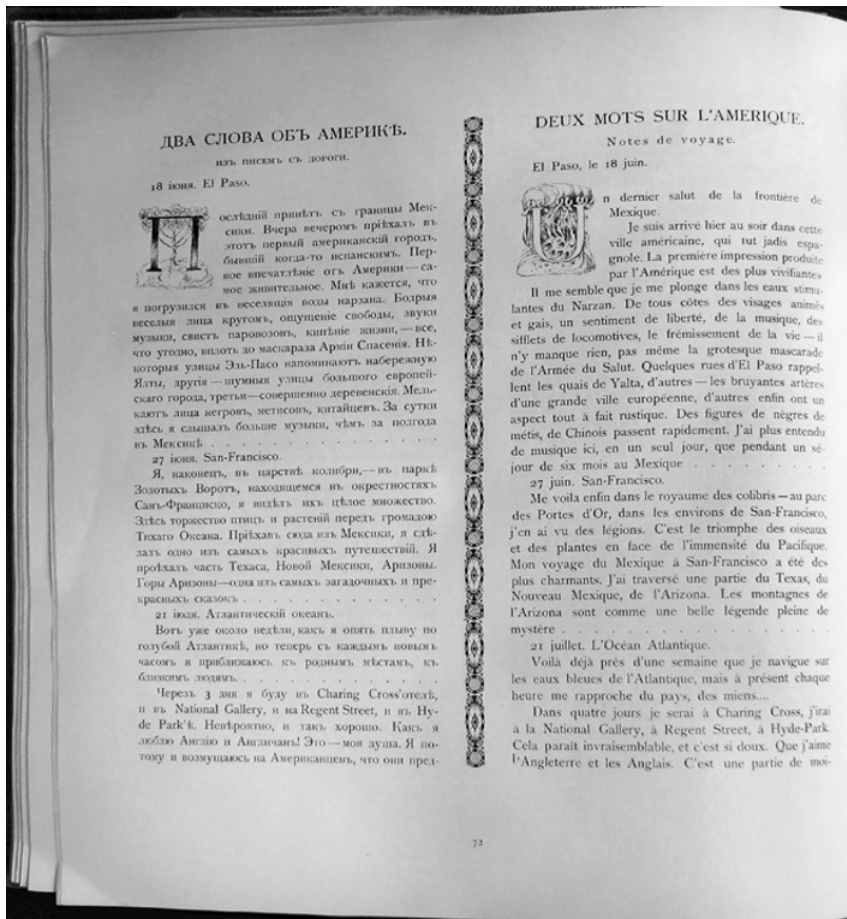


FIGURE 3.18 Title page for Konstantin Bal'mont's article "A Couple of Words about America" ("Dva slova ob Amerike") with Mstislav Dobuzhinskii's decorative rule and dropped capitals by anonymous artist. The Golden Fleece (Zolotoe runo), no. 1, 1906.

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["Dva slova ob Amerike"] (Fig. 3.19).¹⁹⁹ In 1905, Bal'mont travelled in the United States and Mexico.²⁰⁰ As he was a productive and popular writer, his travelogues were widely read.²⁰¹ Thus, *The Scales* introduced Bal'mont's Mexican

199 Konstantin Bal'mont, "Dva slova ob Amerike," *Zolotoe runo* 1 (1906): 72–76.

200 Makogonenko 14.

201 See the section "The Mythological Mexico of Konstantin Balmont" in Richardson, *Mexico through Russian Eyes* 76–88.



FIGURE 3.19

Nikolai Feofilaktov. End piece for Konstantin Bal'mont's essay "A Couple of Words about America" ("Dva slova ob Amerike"). *The Golden Fleece* (Zolotoe runo), no. 1, 1906.

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travel journal;²⁰² and in addition to Bal'mont's translation of *Popol Vuh*, *The Golden Fleece* offered his American travelogue. Feofilaktov's design represented a portrait of a lady framed by a rough oval border that resembled fur and cracked leather. The image, combining the presence of a woman in European dress and other attributes of the civilized world with the "wilderness", embodied by the frame, was a symbolic representation of America. In the visual arts and print culture, the continents often were represented as allegorical images of women and the vignette was a modern interpretation of this tradition.

Bal'mont believed in the future of America,²⁰³ but in his travelogue, America and Americans were described in unfavorable terms (for example, "Americans are caricatures of Englishmen"; a "nasty mixture of the British, German, Belgian, Swiss and something else";²⁰⁴ "Now Americans are intolerable, similar to teen-agers that consider themselves adults. Their hair is pomaded, but their hands are not washed"²⁰⁵). Feofilaktov, who had never been to America, followed Bal'mont's description and created a symbolic image of America as a "transplanted" female person from Europe, now set up in a "wild" and "rough" environment. This was the most "representational" piece designed by Feofilaktov, which, however, suggests not only a "translation" of Bal'mont's words into images, but represents a "parallel text".

Feofilaktov's last vignette was a decorative end piece for *Art Chronicle* (Fig. 3.20). Here the artist again employed a Rococo-revivalist style, but this

202 Bal'mont's key book devoted to Mexico *Snake-like Flowers* (*Zmeinye tsvety*) came out only in 1910.

203 Bal'mont "Dva slova ob Amerike" 75.

204 Bal'mont, "Dva slova ob Amerike" 73.

205 Bal'mont, "Dva slova ob Amerike" 75.



FIGURE 3.20

Nikolai Feofilaktov. End piece for the section of Art Criticism. The Golden Fleece (Zolotoe runo), no. 1, 1906.

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time the intricate form seemed to be moving toward abstraction rendered with dots and linear circular elements. In comparison to his symbolic image of America (Fig. 3.19), this vignette represented a purely decorative object rendered with expressiveness.

The editor-in-chief, Riabushinskii, participated in the production of his art journal as a graphic designer under pseudonym Shinskii. In contrast to Feofilaktov's peacock feathers and lacy vignettes, his approach to graphic design was characterized by "Primitivist" discourses of the period, articulated by Blok in his article and further developed by the Symbolist artists; their "Primitivist" covers and vignettes would soon be one of the main characteristics of *The Golden Fleece*. Perhaps Riabushinskii designed the title page to the Art Section introducing the reproductions inset and several vignettes.²⁰⁶

The title page to the Art Section was the lightly rendered line drawing, printed in shiny metallic green ink. Vrubel's name, written in Russian and French, was surrounded by a frame of bamboo fronds (Fig. 3.21). The bamboo fronds that embraced the image suggest an Orientalist influence. It is quite possible that Riabushinskii, who had recently returned from South-East Asia, might have borrowed this plant motif from Asian art. Even though various Orientalist tendencies were fashionable in Russian art at the time, the appearance of bamboo was quite unusual in the context of Apollo's image in a triumphal chariot, which was depicted above the title. Flutes and lyre were additional references to Apollo (the image of Apollo would soon be the main feature of the future art periodical *Apollo*²⁰⁷). Apollo's image might have symbolically

206 The table of contents states that the publisher created three graphic designs for the first issue, one of them on page 7; however, the first pages are not paginated, so it is hard to identify the designer of this image.

207 See the next chapter.

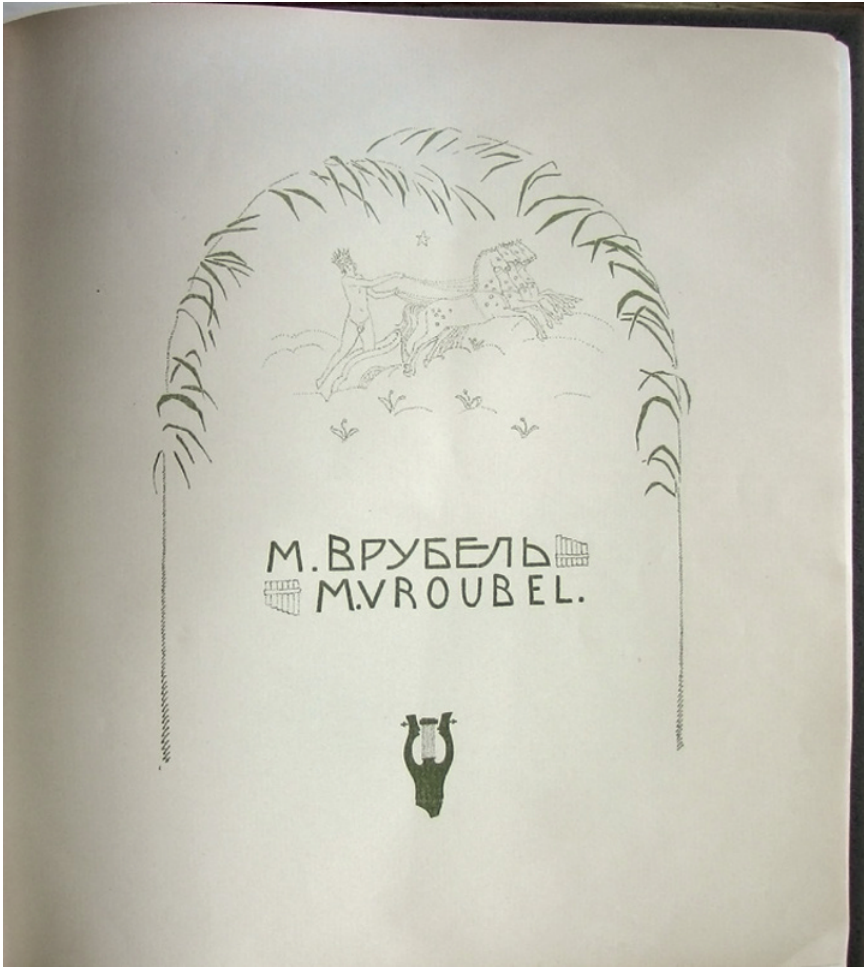


FIGURE 3.21 *N. Shinskii (Nikolai Riabushinskii). Title page for the Art Section devoted to Mikhail Vrubel' in The Golden Fleece no. 1, 1906. Green metallic ink.*

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embodied the highest achievements of Vrubel's art²⁰⁸ and was rendered in a slightly simplified ("Primitivist") manner.

The same simplified, almost a childlike approach, was also visible in Riabushinskii's end piece for Blok's poem "Being in Love" ("Vliublennost").²⁰⁹

208 Not only this title page vignette, but also other images in *The Golden Fleece* referred to Classicism.

209 Aleksandr Blok, "Vliublennost," *Zolotoe runo* 1 (1906): 47–48.

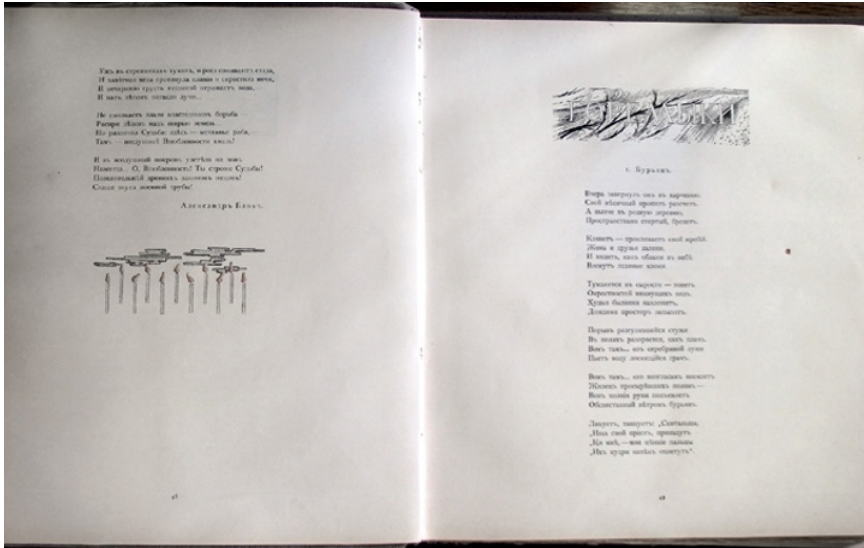


FIGURE 3.22 Page with N. Shinskii's (Nikolai Riabushinskii) end piece for Aleksandr Blok's poem "Being in Love" ("Vliublennost") on the left and Vasilii Masiutin's title for Andrei Belyi's poem "Poor Wretches" ("Goremyki") on the right. The Golden Fleece (Zolotoe runo), no. 1, 1906.

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It represented a "geometry" of vertical and horizontal rhythms (Fig. 3.22, on the left). The vertical rhythm of burning candles was balanced by the horizontal linearity of smoke and created a sharp contrast to the overall decorativeness of the graphic design of the issue. Riabushinskii also designed the last vignette for the issue. It was the end piece for the Critical-Bibliographic Section, an ornamental plate with flower-like birds or bird-like flowers, which seems to have represented the final personal touch of the publisher.

Vasilii Masiutin (1884–1955)²¹⁰ created nine graphic designs for the journal including seven titles. In spite of his obscurity in art circles at the time of publishing *The Golden Fleece* and his lack of graphic design experience, he was commissioned by Riabushinskii. All titles were designed in a simple, but

²¹⁰ Masiutin was a military officer at the time of his work in *The Golden Fleece*; he was less active in exhibiting his works than his counterparts who designed for the same issue. Only in 1908 would he enter the Moscow College of Painting, Sculpture and Architecture (*Moskovskoe Uchilishche Zhivopisi, Vaianiia i Zhdchestva*) to study etching and create his best engravings and series of drawings (Severiukhin and Leikind, *Khudozhniki russkoi emigratsii* 320).



FIGURE 3.23

Vasilii Masiutin. Title page for the section of literature in *The Golden Fleece* (Zolotoe runo), no. 1, 1906.

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FIGURE 3.24

Vasilii Masiutin. Title page for the Critical-Bibliographic Section. *The Golden Fleece* (Zolotoe runo), no. 1, 1906.

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unique and elegant “empty” fonts, which became a characteristic feature of *The Golden Fleece*. The text designed in this font with its transparency appeared as a graphic sign and as an illustration. Masiutin’s title design opened the Literary Section (Fig. 3.23). It featured the frame with a plant motif with leaves, twigs and roses, which surrounded the letters and was depicted in a delicate stippled manner. An ethereal sensibility coming through “suggests” rather than clearly defines the form. His “empty” font was repeated in the title page for the section of Art Criticism and Critical-Philosophical Articles. Here the designer placed the heading against the background of a round wreath-like shape. Rendered in stippling, it resembled a laurel wreath, encompassing a five-pointed star. The “empty” font with italics also appeared in the title page to the Critical-Bibliographic section. In this design, Masiutin placed the title against an Art Nouveau peacock-feather motif background (fig. 3.24).

Bal’mont’s poem “Gold-Sea” (“Zoloto-more”)²¹¹ was composed based on folkloric themes. Masiutin designed the title for this poem using his “empty” font and the end piece showing stones lying on the sea bottom, a detail mentioned in the poem. The graphic title for Briusov’s cycle of poems “Resurrected Songs” (“Voskresshie pesni”)²¹² was also designed in Masiutin’s “empty” lettering arranged against a backdrop. Abstract protagonists, a female nude and women’s profiles, embraced by darkness and “winds” of roses in streams of

211 Konstantin Bal’mont, “Zoloto-more,” *Zolotoe runo* 1 (1906): 40–41.

212 Valerii Briusov, “Voskresshie pesni,” *Zolotoe Runo* 1 (1906): 42–46.

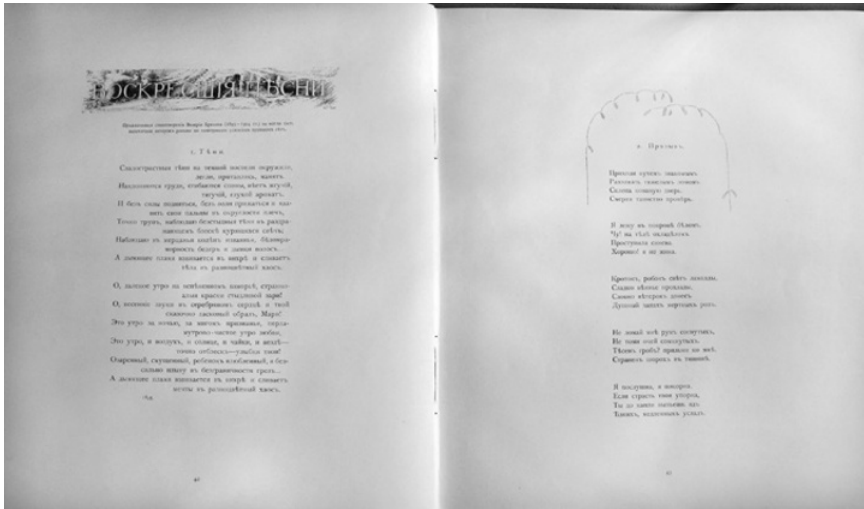


FIGURE 3.25 Page with Vasilii Masiutin's title for Valerii Briusov's cycle of poems "Resurrected Songs" ("Voskresshie pesni") and Nikolai Sapunov's vignette for the poem "Call". The Golden Fleece (Zolotoe runo), no. 1, 1906. The inscription under the title reads: "The poems by Valerii Briusov, written in 1895–1904, could not be published earlier due to censorship conditions of earlier years".

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light, suggested the eroticism of the "Resurrected Songs" (discussion of the cycle follows) (Fig. 3.25; on the left).

Belyi's cycle of poems, "Poor Wretches" ("Goremyki"),²¹³ was devoted to the themes of drunkenness and suicide, and spoke about arson as a social issue of the day.²¹⁴ These texts were also framed with title and end pieces by Masiutin. The title, again realized in an "empty" font, was placed on a background showing a road (Fig. 3.22, on the right). The road with its blast of swirling wind, carrying away tree branches, sand and debris symbolized a path full of turmoil and unhappiness and created an emotional connection with the meaning of Belyi's pessimistic verses. The end piece with the hourglass, a vanitas symbol, summarized the philosophical message of the poems, which highlighted the notion that human life is not eternal. Masiutin's "empty" fonts created an illusion of airy transparency with the backgrounds of unstable whirls and

²¹³ Andrei Belyi, "Goremyki," *Zolotoe runo* 1 (1906): 49–52.

²¹⁴ About arson in late Imperial Russia see Cathy A. Frierson, *All Russia is Burning. A Cultural History of Fire and Arson in Late Imperial Russia* (Seattle and London: University of Washington Press, 2002).

что всё ко всему готовы, и никто ничему не удивляется. Вот, разве только въ общем коридорѣ, который плохо провѣтривается, потому что всѣ двери въ номера всегда плотно заперты,—иногда слишком пахнетъ Чулковской кухней...

Я сѣдѣю, но мнѣ грустно. Я люблю „Вопросы Жизни“, уже потому люблю, что въ нихъ есть и моего капля меду. Они выросли на могилѣ „Новаго Пути“. Но, любя „Вопросы Жизни“, я не знаю, чего бы желалъ имъ больше, счастливаго дозоденствія или скорора трагическаго конца, можетъ-быть, даже самоубийственнаго. Кажется, я предпочелъ бы для нихъ послѣднее, именно потому, что я ихъ люблю. Ну что ла радости, въ самомъ дѣлѣ,—въ этомъ смѣшеніи языковъ, внутренней войнѣ всѣхъ противъ всѣхъ, подъ вышнимъ благополучіемъ бездириванныхъ комнать? Есть прекрасный журналъ, или вѣрнѣе, есть рядъ прекрасныхъ альманховъ-сборниковъ, подъ общимъ заглавіемъ, но нѣтъ действительно общаго, общественаго и религіознаго дѣла. Ужъ пусть бы лучше всѣ участники этого мнимаго дѣла разошлись окончательно; тогда, можетъ-быть, и некоторые изъ нихъ внослѣдствіи и вернулись бы другъ къ другу и сошлись бы тоже окончательно.

По всей вѣроятности, для такого новаго соединенія „Вопросы Жизни“ непригодны и нуженъ совсѣмъ новый журналъ, новое дѣло. Оно, впрочемъ, и естественно: нельзя же вѣчно задавать „вопросы“; въ юнѣ—„вопросы“, въ юль—„вопросы“, въ августѣ—„вопросы“; надо же когда-нибудь и отвѣтить.

Будемъ надѣяться, что отвѣтомъ на „Вопросы Жизни“ будетъ вѣстникъ жизни, дѣла жизни, еще не родиншеся, но уже зачатое, которому и слѣдуетъ отъ всего сердца, не какъ банному, но какъ такому чужому, а какъ своему собственному родному дѣлу: Богъ помочетъ.

Д. С. Мережковскій.



d'après le „nouveau style“, de sorte que tout le monde est prêt à tout, et personne ne s'étonne de rien.

Il n'y a qu'un petit inconvénient, c'est que dans le corridor commun, où la ventilation est mal entretenue, les portes des numéros étant toujours soigneusement fermées, on sent un peu trop la cuisine de Tchoulkov.

Je ris, mais je suis triste. J'aime les „Problèmes de la Vie“, je les aime parce qu'ils contiennent aussi une goutte de mon miel. Ils ont poussé sur la tombe du „Nouveau Chemin“. Mais tout en aimant les „Problèmes de la Vie“, je ne sais ce que je dois de préférence leur souhaiter: une heureuse longévité ou une prompte fin violente, peut-être un suicide. C'est cette dernière fin que je leur aurais souhaitée, et cela précisément parce que je les aime. Et en effet, je ne vois pas le charme de cette confusion des langues, de cette guerre intestine de tous contre tous qui se dissimule sous une prospérité extérieure de chambres meublées. Nous avons un excellent Journal, ou plutôt une série de bons almanachs,—de recueils sous un titre général, mais il n'y a pas d'œuvre sociale et religieuse vraiment commune. Il vaudrait beaucoup mieux que les membres de cette prétendue œuvre commune se séparassent définitivement, alors peut-être beaucoup d'entre eux se retrouveraient de nouveau pour se lier définitivement.

Selon toute probabilité, les „Problèmes de la Vie“ ne sont pas adaptés à cette nouvelle union qui exige un nouvel organe, une nouvelle œuvre. En somme, cette issue est toute naturelle: en effet, il est impossible de toujours poser des questions; en juin des questions; en juillet—des questions, au mois d'août—encore des questions; il faut pourtant songer à donner des réponses.

Espérons que comme réponse aux „Problèmes de la Vie“, il surgira un messenger de la vie même, une œuvre de la vie qui n'est pas encore née mais déjà conçue, une œuvre que nous devons accueillir de tout notre cœur, non comme une œuvre qui nous est sympathique, tout en nous restant étrangère, mais comme notre propre tâche,—en lui souhaitant: Bonne chance.

D. S. Merejkovsky.



FIGURE 3.26 Vasiliĭ Masiutin. End piece for Dmitriĭ Merezhkovskii's article "Against Everyone" ("Protiv vsekh"). The Golden Fleece (Zolotoe runo), no. 1, 1906.

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movements of ambiguous objects unrelated to the texts and referred to the "dream-like" visual realm of Symbolist art.

Masiutin also designed an end piece for Merezhkovskii's article "Everyone Against Everyone" ("Vse Protiv vsekh"),²¹⁵ a review devoted to the religious-philosophical periodical *The Questions of Life* (*Voprosy zhizni*)²¹⁶ (Fig. 3.26).

²¹⁵ Dmitriĭ Merezhkovskii, "Vse Protiv vsekh," *Zolotoe runo* 1 (1906): 90–97.

²¹⁶ *The Questions of Life* began in 1905 to replace the periodical *The New Way* (*Novyi put'*), the journal of the religious-philosophical movement of God-Seeking (*Bogoiskatel'stvo*) and mysticism. To a certain extent, *The New Way* can be described as the literary-philosophical

Merezhkovskii's overview of the new publication, which replaced his brain-child *The New Way*, was supportive and critical at the same time. Masiutin's vignette portrayed an angry woman, almost certainly Medusa Gorgona, a chthonic monster with a wild gaze, widely used in Western European graphic design. An ironic end piece seemingly expressed *The Golden Fleece* artists' point of view on Merezhkovskii and his writings. It is obvious that Masiutin was influenced by the *World of Art's* graphic design and its stylistics, but at the same time his approach to illustration was, to a certain degree, a suggestive Symbolic expansion of decorative forms.

The third Symbolist artist, who contributed to the graphic design of the inaugural issue of *The Golden Fleece*, was Sapunov. His designs represented an "aesthetisation" of the text. A talented painter and colourist, he created for *The Golden Fleece* very light drawings rendered in a Beardslean stippled manner, which were very different from his dense paintings.²¹⁷ He created several vignettes to accompany Briusov's cycle of poems "Resurrected Songs".²¹⁸ Sapunov would have been in a difficult position when commissioned to

section that separated from the *World of Art* in 1902. The new journal was led by Merezhkovskii and Pertsov; both initially started their work at the *World of Art*. *The New Way* represented a traditional Russian "thick journal" and its design was very simple. It was sponsored by the editorial board, mainly based on the financial support of Pertsov himself. Its circulation was 2550 copies for the first issue. In 1904, the editorial team of the periodical split, and a "journal" in the journal was formed. As a result of this split, the new periodical *The Questions of Life* was published in 1905 and eventually replaced *The New Way*. This journal was edited by the major Russian philosophers of the day: Sergii Bulgakov, Nikolai Berdiaev and Nikolai Losskii. The periodical preserved the religious-philosophical tendency of its predecessor, but was moving away from mysticism and God-Seeking toward solving ethical-philosophical problems. See I.V. Koretskaia, "Novyi put'. 'Voprosy zhizni,'" *Literaturnyi protsess i russkaia zhurnalistika kontsa XIX – nachala XX veka 1890–1904*, ed. B.A. Bialik (Moskva: Nauka, 1982) 179–233.

217 Mikhail Kiselev suggests that Sapunov participated as graphic designer in *Art*, *The Scales* and *The Golden Fleece* only because he needed pay his expenses. See Mikhail Kiselev, *Nikolai Sapunov* (Moskva: Belyi gorod, 2002) 9. It is hard to agree with this statement. As it was shown, in the aesthetic realm of *Gesamtkunstwerk* established in the Russian arts of the early twentieth century, graphic design attained a status of art comparable to sculpture or painting.

218 Sapunov, the former student of the Realists Abram Arkhipov (1862–1930), Nikolai Kasatkin (1859–1930), Leonid Pasternak (1862–1945) and Isaak Levitan, and later of Valentin Serov and Konstantin Korovin, was, probably, one of the most experienced and educated artists among the other graphic designers of the issue. From 1900 to 1905 he was involved in theatre set design for the Bolshoi Theatre in Moscow, Mamontov's new opera company (Moscow Hermitage Theatre in the season 1902–1903), and for Vsevolod Meyerhold's (1874–1940) theatrical production. See Gofman, *Golubaia roza* 272; Ida Gofman, "Stikhii

illustrate Briusov's very provocative verses. An editorial note stated that these poems, written in 1895–1904, had not been published earlier due to severe censorship. This collection of poems expressed a "new" direction in aesthetic taste, already formed in previous years, but not yet verbalized as explicitly. It expressed the beauty of the dark side of human nature, its "spiritual renewal" in terms of the demonic, and praised the perverse. Dionysian themes of sexual desire, necrophilia, the view of the dark essence of childbirth, and sexual orgies were the subjects of this cycle.

As a poetic strategy, Briusov, as well as other Russian Symbolists, used "synesthesia", a device deemed pathological by Max Nordau in his *Degeneration*.²¹⁹ In terms of Russian Symbolism, synesthesia implied a "poetry of allusions" (*poeziia namekov*),²²⁰ a concept that could also refer to visual arts of Symbolists. Synesthesia was employed by the younger generation of Russian Symbolists (Bal'mont, Briusov, Blok, and Belyi) in contrast to the older generation (Merezhkovskii, Gippius, Sologub, Minskii and others). The mission of the new generation (led by Bal'mont and Briusov) was the "absolute freedom of artistic creation" (*absoliutnaia svoboda khudozhestvennogo tvorchestva*).²²¹ In his cycle Briusov experimented with descriptions of sensations and depicted scent as "deaf" (*glukhoi aromat*), twilight as "burning" (*sumrak zhguchii*), sound as "flashing" (*mel'knuvshii zvuk*), etc. His "poetry of allusions" represented a complex verbal message expressive of eroticism. Sapunov, however, did not follow the subject of the text, but liberated his visual messages from textual meanings and created images that spoke by themselves in equally associative ways.

The most controversial of Briusov's poems, "The Call" ("Prizyv"), devoted to necrophilous sexual pathology, was written from the point of view of a dead woman lying in a crypt, desperately calling for her lover's last caress. The opening vignette, designed by Sapunov, did not evoke any allusions of forbidden desire and depicted just two simple withered branches (Fig. 3.25, on the right) rendered in a simplified manner. The end piece, a delicate linear drawing, however, commented more explicitly on the text (Fig. 3.27). It portrayed a woman in a veil with roses, supposedly lying in a coffin. It resembled Vrubel's illustration to Mikhail Lermontov's *Demon* (1829),²²² titled *Tamara Lying in a Coffin*

Nikolaia Sapunova, "Nashe Nasledie 7 (2004), 11 Jan. 2012, <<http://www.nasledie-rus.ru/podshivka/7104.php>>.

219 Matich 16–7.

220 Leo Kobylinski-Ellis, *Russkie simvolisty* (Letchworth: Bradda Books, 1972) 151.

221 Kobylinski-Ellis 151.

222 The plot of Lermontov's poem is based on Milton's image of a fallen angel and on a Caucasian legend in which a mountain spirit falls in love with a mortal. According to Lermontov, the Demon seduces a young girl, the Georgian princess Tamara. The reader's

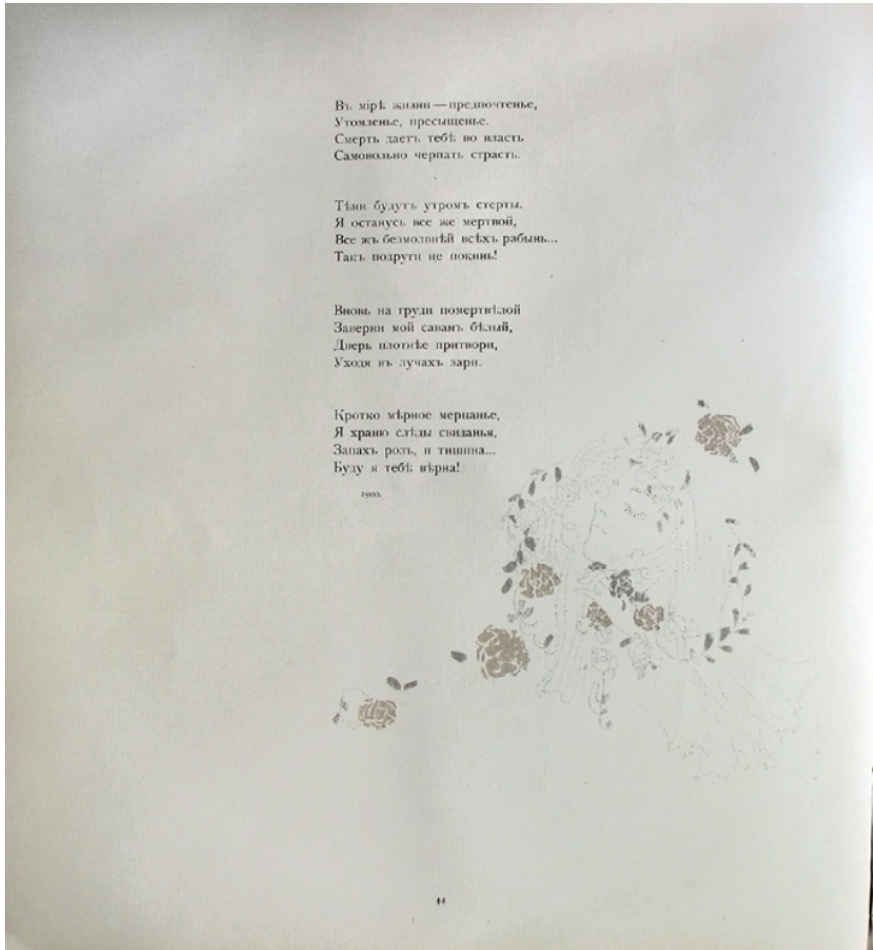


FIGURE 3.27 *Nikolai Sapunov. Vignette for Valerii Briusov's poem "The Call" ("Prizyv"). The Golden Fleece (Zolotoe runo), no. 1, 1906.*

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(1890–91). Vrubel's image of Tamara in a coffin implied an irrational Dionysian passion and "demonic" love. Tamara died unsatisfied and Briusov's heroine too did not fulfill her sexual desire. Such a literary image of death, as rendered by Briusov, can be explained as "immortalizing love's body by defeating death".²²³

sympathies are pulled to the image of rebellion and unhappiness of Tamara. At the end, however, the princess's guardian angel saves her soul after her death.

223 Matich 12.



FIGURE 3.28

Nikolai Sapunov. End piece for Valerii Briusov's poem "A Woman" ("Zhenshchina"). The Golden Fleece (Zolotoe runo), no 1, 1906. COURTESY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS AT URBANA-CHAMPAIGN LIBRARY.

Briusov's literary image was one of many poetic illustrations of the conquest of death through the immortality of sexuality and sexual desire. Sapunov's dead woman in the coffin surrounded by roses (roses appear in graphic design of the issue again), however, likely alluded to innocence.²²⁴

The drawing for Briusov's overtly misogynistic poem, "A Woman" ("Zhenshchina"), which was about the physical pain of childbirth, and was Briusov's expression of what he conceived as the bestial essence of women, was decorated with Sapunov's end piece (Fig. 3.28): a simple drawing of a lily of the valley, which, according to Slavic symbolism, refers to purity and virginity and is here became associated with womanhood and childbirth. The last poem of the cycle, "In Twilight" ("V sumrake"), depicted a *ménage à trois*, which was accompanied by Sapunov's very light and graceful drawing of a flower wreath (Fig. 3.14, on the left). The wreath, an archetypal Slavic symbol of virginity, told a different story, quite contradictory to the meaning of the text. Sapunov's ambivalent graphic designs, as if deliberately, referred to completely opposite meanings than the text. Sapunov probably consciously suppressed his outraged impressions triggered by Briusov's poems and thereby intentionally produced these "naïve" drawings to "aestheticize" the texts and diminish a possibly negative response from the reader. The art critic Abram Efros (1888–1954), in a posthumous article devoted to Sapunov, considered him quite a conservative

²²⁴ Sapunov, who came out of merchant class, imagined the woman in the coffin depicted as a girl (a virgin) who had died before she was married. According to common Slavic tradition, a girl who died natural death was buried in a wedding dress as it was believed that in a better world she would find a husband. So Sapunov's image likely alluded to innocence rather than to lust and sexuality.

artist, “a diplomatic good boy” (*diplomaticheskoe pai-mal’chestvo*), quiet and not strong enough to participate in the Modernist struggle.²²⁵ To a certain degree, Sapunov’s approach to illustration, in which he contradicted the poet, appeared as a radical “irrationalist” transformation of the image, which speaks in its own right and without correspondence to the actual text.

The graphic design in *The Golden Fleece* represented a laboratory of experiments with Symbolist conceptions of illustration. If the artists from the *World of Art* who participated in the design tried to connect the illustration to the text, the young generation of designers associated with *The Golden Fleece* offered a “parallel text” or a *double lecture* in Mallarméan terms. Their Dionysian undertones and “Primitivist” approaches to the form contrasted to the Apollonian clarity employed by the former *World of Art*’s graphic artists. The following issues of *The Golden Fleece* would acquire more Symbolist and “Primitivist” tactics of simplification, while the Apollonian clarity would soon return to become the ideology of *Apollo*.

Conclusion

The Golden Fleece was the most luxurious and expensive among Russian Modernist art journals and cost the publisher his private fortune. Its presentation impressed even the tsar: Riabushinskii had a special audience with Nicholas II and presented him with nine issues, a kind of Fabergé egg, in a binding he personally designed.²²⁶

The journal was perceived by its contemporaries in the art worlds very critically: they criticized it for its appropriation of already-developed ideas, for its mediocre program, and for its lack of novelty wrapped into an exquisite “packaging”. Nevertheless, *The Golden Fleece* celebrated the advancement of printing. From the time the *World of Art* published its first issues to the appearance of *The Golden Fleece*, printing and reproduction techniques had advanced in Russia. The journal’s high printing quality was indeed noticed by contemporaries, but this was not necessarily seen as a virtue and was often perceived as evidence of Riabushinskii’s ostentation.

The new journal was conceived and appeared as a bilingual periodical published in Russian and French: the publisher wanted to promote his periodical abroad and compete with the foremost European journals of the day. Bilingualism was Riabushinskii’s tribute to Modernist cosmopolitan fashion

225 Abram Efros, *Mastera raznykh epokh* (Moskva: Sovetskii khudozhnik, 1979) 175.

226 Richardson, *Zolotoe runo* 45.

and was a step toward a European distribution of Russian cultural achievements. This showed that Riabushinskii tried to follow in Diaghilev's footsteps in the promotion of Russian culture abroad.

The graphic design of *The Golden Fleece* represented an amalgamation of two approaches. Bakst, Dobuzhinskii and Lanceray's works linked it with the *World of Art*. Feofilaktov, Riabushinskii, Sapunov and Masiutin represented a fresh wave in graphic arts. Influenced by the *World of Art*, they, nevertheless, employed new Symbolist and pushed "Primitivist" approaches to the illustration of texts further. If Bakst, Dobuzhinskii and Lanceray maintained the *World of Art*'s "rational" mode and Apollonian clarity of forms and ideas, Sapunov, Masiutin and Feofilaktov tended to "aestheticize" the textual meanings and present Symbolist, Dionysian and "irrational" and "dematerialized" visions of texts. It was a celebration of the indistinct, a gesture toward an ethereal, other-worldly realm, in which a concrete form dissolves into an "empty" font, stippled dots and light shimmering colours. The graphic designs of *The Golden Fleece* epitomized artistic polyphony and often represented "parallel texts" that accompanied the literature of the journal.

Due to its high printing quality and unique approach to graphic design, Riabushinskii produced a periodical that became a genuine art object. The production of such an "haute couture" art journal moved Russian art periodical culture to the next level. Its successor, *Apollo*, represented a "negation" of *The Golden Fleece*'s excessiveness and luxury. It would also consider the *World of Art* as its model, but this periodical would develop its own unique ideology of "Apollonianism" and a corresponding conception of graphic design.

Apollo: Between “Archaism” and Modernism

This chapter is devoted to *Apollo* (*Apollon*), published from 1909 to 1917, the propagator of the classical revival and “Apollonianism” (Fig. 4.1). This journal was the third and last major art periodical before the revolution. Among all the periodicals examined here, *Apollo* was the most clear and consistent in realizing its aesthetic program.

Apollo was much less luxurious than *The Golden Fleece* or the *World of Art*, but its publication was to a large extent a continuation of its forerunners’ attempt to revive print culture, but in new artistic and technological conditions. Of the three journals, *Apollo* was the most unassuming in terms of its appearance and graphic design, but also the most coherent in terms of its visual identity: it rarely changed its cover or title-page design and tended toward a simple elegance.

Apollo was published at the rate of ten issues per year (with some exceptions¹). It was the most long-lived journal. A total of 91 issues appeared, some of which were combined. Its last issues, although dated 1917, appeared in 1918. *Apollo* was printed first in the publishing house “Anchor” (“Iakor”) and from 1911 in the press house “Sirius”, both located in St Petersburg, and was edited initially by Sergei Makovskii and from 1911 by Makovskii and Baron Nikolai Vrangeli’ (1880–1915) together.²

The journal was international in scope and had the following sections: (1) The Art Section (*Khudozhestvennyi otdel*); (2) General Questions concerning Literature and Literary Criticism (*Obshchie voprosy literatury i literaturnaia kritika*); (3) Questions of Art and Art Criticism (*Voprosy iskusstva i khudozhestvennaia kritika*); (4) Music (*Muzyka*); (5) Theatre (*Teatr*); (6) a satirical section “The Bees and Wasps of *Apollo*” (*Pchely i osy Apollona*); (7) Chronicle (*Khronika*), a separately paginated section that provided the latest information about artistic life in Russia and abroad; and (8) Literary Almanac (*Literaturnyi al'manakh*), which published literary works of various genres. Some sections appeared irregularly (such as the Literary Almanac beginning from 1911); other sections were cancelled and new ones were introduced. For example, in 1913, *Apollo* launched the new section “The Russian Art Annals” (*Russkaia khudozhestvennaia letopis'*), later, in 1914, this was changed to “The Art Annals” (*Khudozhestvennaia letopis'*).

1 In 1909, only 3 issues were published, and in 1910, 9 numbers were printed.

2 Irina Koretskaia, “Apollon,” *Russkaia literatura i zhurnalistika nachala XX veka. 1905–1917. Burzhuzno-liberal'nye i modernistskie izdaniia*, ed. B.A. Bialik (Moskva: Nauka. 1984) 213.

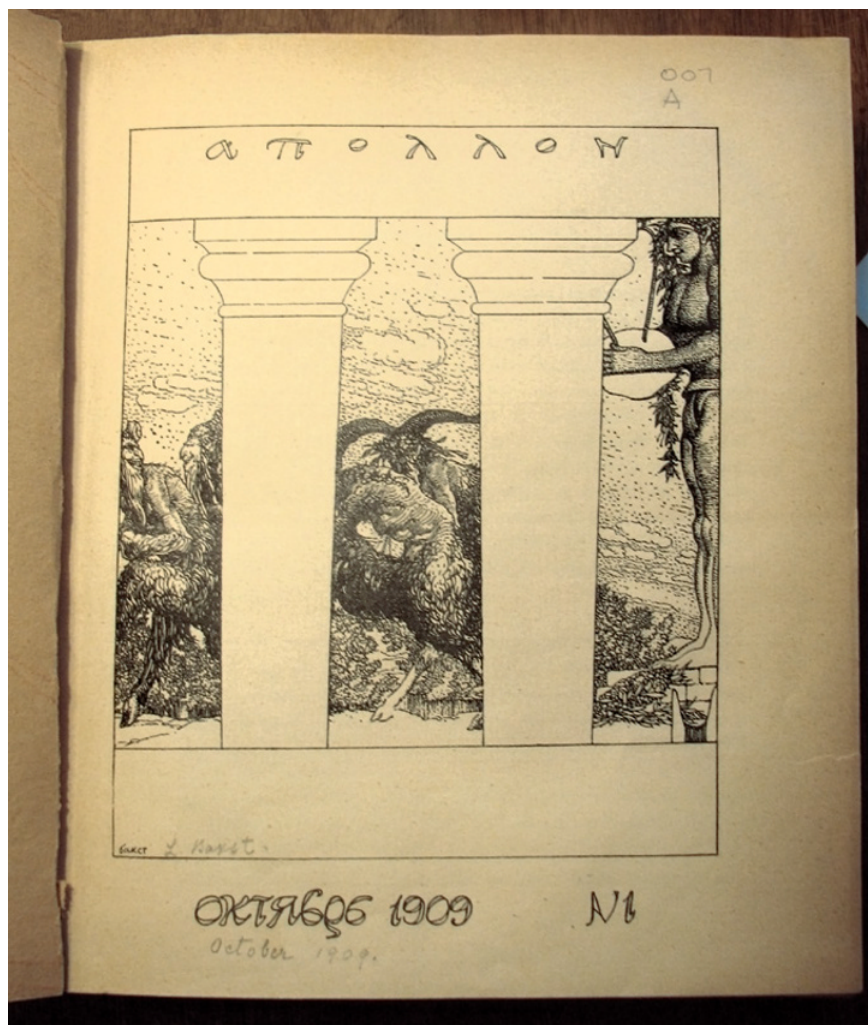


FIGURE 4.1 Léon Bakst. Title page for Apollo (Apollon), no. 1, 1909.

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Also in 1914, the "Chronicle" section was cancelled. It is also important to mention that a new section – "Art and War" (*Iskusstvo i voina*)³ – appeared in 1914. The table of contents was placed at the end of the journal – a common style for subsequent periodicals and one which likely was adopted from European models.

3 See in detail Krzysztof Cieřlik, "Echa pierwszej wojny światowej w czasopiśmie 'Apollon,'" *Slavia Orientalis* 52/2 (2003): 193–207.

Financial support for *Apollo* was provided by the publishing house “Anchor” and its owner, the publisher Semen Efron (1866–1933), the brother of Il’ia Efron (1847–1917), the owner of the printing house “Brockhaus and Efron”. After the first issue was published, the support of the Efrons ceased, and Makovskii himself with Mikhail Ushkov (1881–?), an art dealer and member of a wealthy merchant family, financed the periodical.⁴ In this respect, Makovskii’s involvement in financing the journal could be compared to Riabushinskii’s financing of *The Golden Fleece*. The cost of a subscription to *Apollo* was comparable to that of the *World of Art*: 9 roubles per year without delivery and 10 roubles with (recall that *The Golden Fleece*’s yearly subscription was 15 roubles). Foreign readers could subscribe to the periodical for 12 roubles per year. In fact, *Apollo*, like other art periodicals, was not successful in terms of moneymaking.⁵

Apollo in Scholarship

Of the three journals investigated here, *Apollo* remains the least studied. As of this writing, Denis Mickiewicz’s PhD dissertation *Phoebus Apollo or Musagetes: The Position of Apollon in Russian Modernism*, written in 1967,⁶ still remains one of the main studies. This unpublished monograph deals largely with Modernist poetry and traces the shift from Symbolism to Acmeism in the periodical. Another major contribution, focusing on the journal’s history, is Irina Koretskaia’s article (1984), published in an anthology of essays devoted to the Russian periodical press of the early twentieth century.⁷ As an important landmark in Russian cultural life, *Apollo* is constantly mentioned in articles and chapters devoted to Russian ballet, literature and graphic design. For example, Tim Scholl explores *Apollo* and its aesthetic program in both an article (1993)⁸ and book chapter (1994)⁹ in connection with developments of Russian ballet.

4 Makovskii, *Na Parnase* “Serebrianogo veka” 197–98.

5 In letters from 1910, Nikolai Vrangeli, a regular contributor to the journal since 1910, wrote to the secretary of the journal Evgenii Znosko-Borovskii (1884–1854) that for six weeks he was not able to receive royalties for his publications that were published over the past three months (Qtd. in Irina Zolotinkina, “Nikolai Vrangeli, baron i iskusstvoved,” *Nashe nasledie* 69 (2004). Jan 16, 2012 <<http://www.nasledie-rus.ru/podshivka/6907.php>>).

6 Denis Mickiewicz, “Phoebus Apollo or Musagetes: The Position of Apollon in Russian Modernism,” PhD diss., Yale U, 1967.

7 Koretskaia, “Apollon” 212–256.

8 Tim Scholl, “From Apollon to Apollo,” *Ballet Review* Winter (1993): 82–96.

9 See the chapter “Two Apollos” in Tim Scholl, *From Petipa to Balanchine* (London and New York: Routledge, 1994) 79–104. This chapter is a republication of the earlier article.

Focusing mostly on the eponymous ballet (*Apollon Musaget* as presented at the 1928 premiere), he explores *Apollo* as the declaration of a classicizing program, later adopted by the art of dance. More specific questions dealing with *Apollo's* history and aesthetics and its satirical department, "The Bees and Wasps of *Apollo*" ("Pchely i osy Apollona"), became a focal point for several articles published in the 1980s. These include the work of Vadim Kreid¹⁰ and Kirill Taranovskii,¹¹ who polemicized with Kreid, and in the 2000s by the Russian scholar Pavel Dmitriev,¹² who traces the various sources of the title of the satirical section and outlines the history of the journal's emergence.

Archival scholars who published the correspondence among the major journal participants have also made a valuable contribution to the journal's study. These publications shed light on some specific moments of the periodical's founding and the personal relations between its contributors.¹³ In 2009, Dmitriev published a book that contains a part of the periodical's table of contents and lists the articles devoted to theatre (from the "Theatre" department and the "Chronicles" section); the book features republications of some key *Apollo* articles and reprints of the important publishing contracts signed by the editorial board.¹⁴ Finally, in terms of graphic design features, *Apollo* was reviewed by Janet Kennedy¹⁵ and Mikhail Kiselev¹⁶ in aforementioned articles that represent surveys of Russian art periodicals of the turn of the century.

None of these works, however, analyze the journal's material form, or discuss text-image intermediality or the relation of graphic design to the text; instead they focus predominantly on one medium (texts or, more rarely, on

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- 10 Vadim Kreid, "Neizvestnaia stat'ia Gumileva?" *Novyi zhurnal – The New Review* 166 (1987): 189–202.
 - 11 Kirill Taranovskii, "Zametki o dialoge 'Skuchnyi razgovor' v pervom nomere 'Apollona' (Oktiabr' 1909g)," *Russian, Croatian and Serbian, Czech and Slovak, Polish Literature* 1/26 October (1989): 417–423.
 - 12 P.F. Dmitriev, "Pchely i osy 'Apollona': K voprosu formirovaniia estetiki zhurnala," *Russkaia literatura* 1 (2008): 222–236.
 - 13 A.V. Lavrov and R.D. Timenchik, eds. and comps., "I.F. Annenskii, Pis'ma k S.K. Makovskomu," *Ezhegodnik rukopisnogo otdela Pushkinskogo doma na 1976 god*, (Leningrad: Nauka, 1978): 222–241; N.A. Bogomolov and S.S. Grechishkin, eds. and comps., "Perepiska V.I. Ivanova s S.K. Makovskim," *Novoe literaturnoe obozrenie. Istoriko-literaturnaia seriia* 10 (1994): 137–64.
 - 14 P. Dmitriev, "*Apollon*" (1909–1910). *Materialy iz redaktsionnogo portfel'ia* (Sankt-Peterburg, "Baltiiskie sezony", 2009). Dmitriev republished Benois's "In Expectation of the Hymn to Apollo" and "The Bees and Wasps of *Apollo*" published in the first issue.
 - 15 Kennedy, "*The World of Art* and Other Turn-of-the-Century Russian Art Journals" 63–78.
 - 16 Kiselev, "Graphic Design and Russian Art Journals" 50–67.

images). Nor do they study the journal's philosophy of Apollonianism as expressed by words and images. This chapter will look at the inaugural issue and examine its aesthetic program from the perspective of the paratextual dimensions and on the basis of the editorial statement, "In Expectation of the Hymn to Apollo" (by Alexandre Benois). The discussion will focus on the Apollonian graphic design of the journal, as well as the ideology of Apollonianism, which is best understood through an exploration of the classical revival and the development of Nietzscheanism.

Contextual Preconditions for *Apollo*: Classical Revival Tendencies and the New Paradigm for Book Art

Classical Revival: The Term

In using the term "classical revival", this chapter follows Elizabeth Cowley and Jennifer Mundy. According to them the term and its analogues (i.e., "call for order" and "the return to order") identified the widespread classicizing tendency in European arts of the early twentieth century.¹⁷ As Cowley and Mundy point out, this tendency was triggered during World War I (around 1914) in France and Italy and spread throughout the rest of Europe after the end of the war.¹⁸ Parallel movements were established in Britain and Germany, where "the decision was taken to explore the specific interpretation of *classicism*, rather than a more general return to the figurative tradition, and thus to concentrate upon the Latin countries, where it was claimed...that the classical tradition was the native tradition".¹⁹ Cowley and Mundy do not include Russia in their discussion. However, in late Imperial Russia, the emergence of a similar tendency could be identified well before World War I (the early 1900s); its aesthetic program was announced with the launch of *Apollo* in 1909.²⁰

17 Elizabeth Cowley and Jennifer Mundy, introduction, *On Classical Ground. Picasso, Leger, de Chirici and the New Classicism 1910–1930* by Elizabeth Cowley and Jennifer Mundy, eds. (London: Tate Gallery, 1990) 11.

18 Cowley and Mundy 11.

19 Cowley and Mundy 11.

20 According to Soviet and Post-Soviet art-historical terminology, the term "Classics" (*klasika*) refers to Classical Greek art; the term "Classicism" stands for Russian and European art of the late eighteenth- and early nineteenth centuries in parallel with West European term "Neo-Classicism" (the idiom "Empire Style" signals its later, nineteenth-century development) and the term "Neo-Classicism" in Russia speaks of the classicizing tendencies in art and architecture during the early twentieth century. See, for example,

In turn-of-the-century Western Europe, the classicizing tendency did not play as important a role as in pre-revolutionary Russia where it served as a custodian of time-tested traditions. Such a tendency signified a predisposition to overcome a seemingly destructive individualist predilection – and provide an escape from revolutionary chaos and destruction – by way of a “systematization” of artistic culture under the aegis of Apollonian universal values. All this occurred against the background of the social and political instability in Russia after the Russo-Japanese War (1904–1905) and the revolution of 1905. Such a shift toward classically-inspired art forms signified a crisis of individualism (articulated by Benois, Viacheslav Ivanov and others²¹); on the other hand, it spoke to the desire to fold Russia into a Pan-European archeological meta-narrative about the Classical origin of European civilization as a new step toward the expansion of Russia’s self-imagining as a European state. This idea appeared as a logical continuation of Diaghilev’s intention to announce Russian art, with its distinctive national features, as part of European art development in his editorial manifesto for the first issue of the *World of Art*.²²

The revivalist tendency of re-establishing the Great Tradition clearly began earlier than the launch of *Apollo*, that is, with the *World of Art*. Its artists always appreciated the “classical” citations in the art of Gustave Moreau (e.g. *Oedipus and the Sphinx*, 1864; *Jason and Medea*, 1865; *Hesiod and the Muse*, 1891), and especially valued the classical revival works by Puvis de Chavannes²³ (e.g. *Sacred Wood*, 1884–9; *Young Girls by the Sea*, 1894). As early as 1902, the *World of Art* published the famous article “Picturesque Petersburg” (“Zhivopisnyi Peterburg”), in which Benois for the first time expressed his pro-Classicist nostalgic feelings.²⁴ His message was immediately taken up by contemporaries, who witnessed “Petersburg being destroyed by entrepreneurs whose new buildings violated the spirit of the imperial architectural ensemble”.²⁵ Ivan

Vladimir Kruglov, “Russkii neoklassitsizm,” *Neoklassitsizm v Rossii* (Sankt Petersburg: Palace Editions – Graficart, 2008) 13–30.

21 The “crisis of individualism” was a contemporary cultural discussion. In his already mentioned seminal article “Artistic Heresies,” Alexandre Benois perceived individualism as harmful to the development of artistic culture. See Benua, “Khudozhestvennye eresi” 80–88; also see Viacheslav Ivanov, “Krizis individualizma,” *Rodnoe i vselenskoe* by Viacheslav Ivanov, ed. V.M. Tolmachev (Moskva: Respublika, 1994) 18–25.

22 See Chapter II.

23 In his memoirs, Benois mentions that Diaghilev met Puvis de Chavannes during his trip to Europe in 1895 (See Benua, *Moi vospominaniia* vol. 2, 68).

24 Aleksandr Benua, “Zhivopisnyi Peterburg,” *Mir Iskusstva* 1 (1902).

25 William Craft Brumfield, “Neoclassical Aesthetism in Pre-revolutionary Russian Architecture,” *New Perspectives on Russian and Soviet Artistic Culture: Selected Papers from*

Fomin (1872–1936), who designed a country house in a modernized Classical-revivalist style for Prince P.P. Volkonskii in 1903, responded to Benois's article.²⁶ In 1904 he published his own text devoted to the Neo-Classical architecture in Moscow.²⁷ Between 1907 and 1917 architects – including Fedor Lidval (1870–1945), Marian Peretiatkovich (1872–1916), Marian Lialevich (1876–1944), Boris Girshovich (1856–1911), Vladimir Shchuko (1878–1939), Andrei Belograd (1875–1933) and others – put the classical revival into practice in their architectural designs.²⁸

Initiated in architecture, the classical revival soon penetrated all artistic forms and was expressed in painting in various ways: as “quotations” of eighteenth-century art (Benois and Konstantin Somov) or as “*primitif classique*” (Léon Bakst and Valentin Serov). It was implemented in graphic design, as seen in the use of Classical sculptural and architectural motifs such as columns, stages, porticoes, entablature, vases, fountains and nudes (Bakst, Somov, Mstislav Dobuzhinskii and others). The classical revival was employed in designs for interiors, furniture and household items. In the 1910s it would be reflected in the so-called neo-Academism evident in painting (Vasilii Shukhaev, 1887–1973; Aleksandr Iakovlev, 1887–1938;²⁹ Kuz'ma Petrov-Vodkin 1878–1939; Zinaida Serebriakova, 1884–1967) and sculpture (Sergei Kononov, 1874–1971;³⁰ Aleksandr Matveev, 1878–1960).³¹

The “return to order” associated with Greco-Roman antiquity was also visually expressed as a reinterpretation of Russian Neo-Classicism and the Empire Style. When the Empire Style originated in France, it served to glorify Napoleon I and his exploits; in Imperial Russia, after the Patriotic War of 1812, Russian society employed the imported French Empire Style (*ampir*) to embrace high

Fourth World Congress for Soviet and East European Studies. Harrogate, 1990, ed. John O. Norman (Palgrave: Macmillan, 1994) 42.

26 William Craft Brumfield, “Anti-Modernism and the Neoclassical Revival in Russian Architecture, 1906–1916,” *The Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 48/4 (Dec 1989): 374.

27 The article was also published in the *World of Art*. See Ivan Fomin, “Moskovskii klassitsizm,” *Mir Iskusstva* 7 (1904); See the details in Brumfield, “Anti-Modernism and the Neoclassical Revival”.

28 Brumfield, “Anti-Modernism” 371–386; Brumfield, “Neoclassical Aesthetism” 41–53.

29 See Elena Borisova and Grigorii Sternin, *Russkii neoklassitsizm* (Moskva: Galart, 2002) 39–45.

30 In 1912, Kononov travelled to Greece and afterward he made Grecian themes the main subject matter for his works (Borisova and Sternin 75).

31 Borisova and Sternin 233–245.

civic ideals and a heroic mode.³² Also the classicizing tendency was expressed as a "return to yet more original forms",³³ which meant an artistic reinterpretation of the Archaism of the recently discovered archaic periods of Greek art. The so-called "*primitif classique*"³⁴ became another face of the Russian classical revival.

Apollo's first issue emphasized both the "return to order" and the "*primitif classique*". *Apollo's* "*primitif classique*" was expressed as a "return" to Archaism, inspired by the recently discovered Minoan civilization in Crete. It was heralded by Bakst on the title page of the periodical (Fig. 4.1) and discussed by Maksimilian Voloshin in his seminal article "Archaism in Russian Painting" published in the inaugural issue (discussion follows). In the imagination of *Apollo's* creators, "*primitif classique*" was an earlier stage of Greek art developing long before Phidias or Praxiteles. They imagined the Cretan "*primitif classique*" as a representation of another, earlier "face" of Classicism. Later issues would become more explicitly "Classicist" and represented the classicizing tendency through direct "citations" from Greco-Roman Classical art (see, for example, Fig. 4.2) with their Classical "quotations" of images of Apollo and Classical porticos.

The newly manifested "call for order" and Apollonianism meant a return to "certainty" in Russian artistic culture that would, as Tim Scholl put it, "temper the chaotic intensity of Symbolist literature, painting, and music; impose a new order upon architecture's *style moderne*".³⁵ On the other hand, *Apollo* heralded the classical revival as opposition to radical movements, such as, for example, Russian Cubo-Futurism, which was emerging around 1910. In this cultural context, the role of *Apollo* appears more important than it might seem at first.

Sergei Makovskii and the Birth of Apollo

In 1930, the poet and essayist Georgii Chulkov (1879–1939) – editor of the literary-philosophical periodical *The Questions of Life* and contributor to *The Scales* and *The Golden Fleece* – described in his memoirs the literary and artistic situation in St Petersburg two decades earlier: "Around 1910 all the literary struggles had calmed down. A need to reconsider all pursuits and achievements in

32 E.D. Frolov, *Russkaia nauka ob antichnosti. Istoriograficheskie ocherki* (Sankt-Peterburg: Izdatel'stvo S.-Peterburgskogo universiteta, 1999) 112.

33 Cowley and Mundy 26.

34 Cowley and Mundy 26.

35 Scholl, "From *Apollon* to *Apollo*" 82.

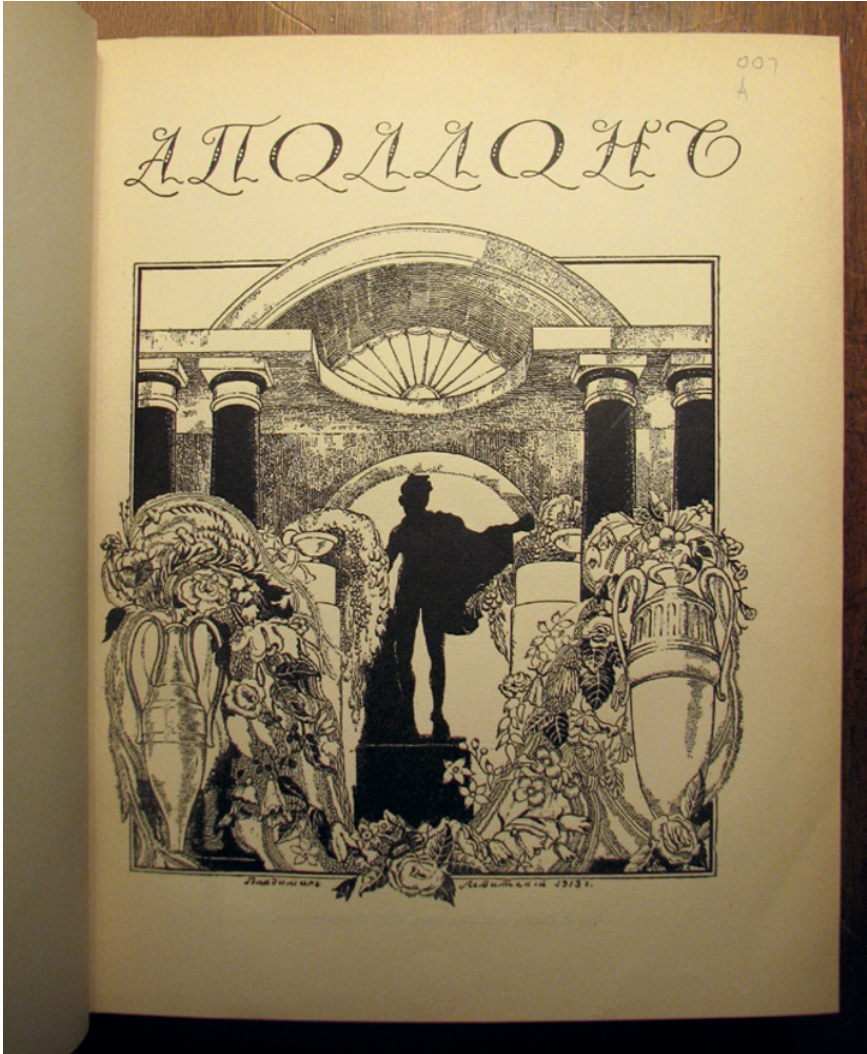


FIGURE 4.2 Vladimir Levitskii. Title page for *Apollo (Apollon)*, no. 1, 1914.
COURTESY OF THE FRICK ART REFERENCE LIBRARY.

aesthetics and poetics had emerged. The need for a good 'European' cultural journal became apparent. *Apollo* became this new periodical".³⁶ According to Chulkov, *Apollo*

36 Georgii Chulkov, *Gody stranstvii. Iz knigi vospominanii* (Moskva: Izdatel'stvo "Federatsiia", 1930) 184.

arrived when everything had already been prepared (*prishel na vse gotovoe*). [Apollo] was not persecuted or suppressed. Its editor was S.K. Makovskii, the son of the very artist Konstantin Makovskii who once was derided by Alexandre Benois and his friends.³⁷ The son of the famous (but not because of his endeavors) father became a pretender to the role of an artistic arbiter (*khudozhestvennyi arbitr*), a trendsetter of good taste, and patron of refined Modernism. *Apollo* was a perfectly proper journal, which resembled the best Western monthlies devoted to art.³⁸

In the beginning of November 1909, Sergei Poliakov (1874–1942), the journalist, translator, and owner of the Moscow Symbolist publishing house "The Scorpion", the printing house of *The Scales*,³⁹ wrote to Voloshin: "*Apollo* was born, and *The Scales* is fading in darkness before Apollo's effulgent face (*Vesy skryvaiutsia pered ego lucezarnym likom vo mrak*)."⁴⁰ As Koretskaia asserted, the new Petersburg periodical "was meant not only to replace the Symbolist journals *The Scales* and *The Golden Fleece*", but to define a new stage in the development of Russian Modernism.⁴¹

The idea of publishing a new contemporary art periodical in St Petersburg was articulated for the first time at the end of 1908.⁴² *Apollo* appeared in late 1909, the same year that *The Golden Fleece* and *The Scales* published their final issues. The first meeting of the prospective editorial board occurred on May 9, 1909⁴³ and the first issue came out on October 24, 1909.

The chief editor of *Apollo*, the poet, art critic and art historian Sergei Makovskii, the son of the famous Wanderer Konstantin Makovskii, was a noted figure in the Russian art world. His first article dedicated to visual art, which discussed Vasnetsov's murals in the St Vladimir Cathedral in Kiev (Kyiv),⁴⁴ had been published in 1898 in the journal *God's World* (*Mir Bozhii*).⁴⁵ The next year

37 Here Chulkov refers to the ongoing war of the *World of Art* against the Wanderers.

38 Chulkov 188.

39 Lobanov 176.

40 Qtd. in Koretskaia, "Apollon" 212.

41 Koretskaia, "Apollon" 212.

42 Lavrov and Timenchik 223; Bogomolov and Grechishkin 137.

43 Lavrov and Timenchik 224–228.

44 Later Makovskii would confess that his devotion to Vasnetsov was just a drug (*durman*) and lasted not for a long time. Sergei Makovskii, *Portrety sovremennikov* (Moskva: Izdatel'skii dom "XXI vek – Soglasie", 2000) 200.

45 Sergei Makovskii, "V.M. Vasnetsov i Vladimirskii sobor," *Mir bozhii* 3 (1898): 201–219; See also his other article on Vasnetsov, Sergei Makovskii, "Vystavka kartin V.M. Vasnetsova," *Mir Bozhii* 3 (1899): 14–16.

Makovskii travelled through Bavaria and was so impressed by Arnold Böcklin's artwork with its imagery of "naiads, centaurs and sea villas", that he decided to express his feelings in an article about the artist.⁴⁶ Sergei Diaghilev, who met Makovskii shortly after this trip and highly praised Makovskii's article on Viktor Vasnetsov, suggested writing an essay for the *World of Art*. Makovskii enthusiastically accepted his offer and soon submitted his text on Böcklin. Diaghilev, however, rejected this essay,⁴⁷ and it was eventually published in *God's World* in 1898,⁴⁸ the same year the *World of Art* was conceived and *Art and Art Industry* started its publication with an issue devoted to Vasnetsov. Makovskii recalled that his acquaintance with Diaghilev played a tremendously important role in his life. Even though none of Makovskii's articles were ever published in the *World of Art*, he was regularly invited to attend the journal's editorial meetings, which taught him much. At those meetings the future editor "was plunged into the atmosphere of thoughtful and experienced (*vseiskushennyi*) service devoted to art".⁴⁹

According to the artist Aleksandr Golovin, his contemporary Makovskii was "a direct product of Petersburg (*priamoe porozhdenie Peterburga*) and embodied all the peculiarities of the 'Petersburgian' attitudes".⁵⁰ It was expected that in his journal Makovskii would "reincarnate" the spirit of art journalism of the *World of Art*.

From 1904 to 1909 the Petersburg cultural elite did not have an art journal in which to express themselves. During these years they were able to publish only in Moscow's *The Scales* and *The Golden Fleece*, which meant accepting Moscow's dominance in publishing. Obviously, St Petersburg's cultural elite was waiting for an art periodical that would re-establish their primacy in the art-publishing world. When *Apollo* appeared, the only continuing art periodical in St Petersburg was *The Olden Years*, a journal that was addressed to "lovers of art and antiquities" (*liubiteliam iskusstva i stariny*). It was oriented toward a discussion of art historical themes and reproductions of historical art collections; according to its mandate, contemporary exhibits, new publications and art events were out of range. Thus, Makovskii clearly understood that "after Diaghilev's the *World of Art*, Petersburg needed to produce an art-literary journal of the 'young generation' (*zhurnal 'molodykh'*)".⁵¹

46 Makovskii, *Portrety sovremennikov* 201.

47 Makovskii, *Portrety sovremennikov* 202.

48 Sergei Makovskii, "Arnold Böcklin," *Mir Bozhii* 4 (1899): 34.

49 Makovskii, *Portrety sovremennikov* 203.

50 Qtd. in Lavrov and Timenchik 222.

51 Makovskii, *Portrety sovremennikov* 268.

Makovskii gained substantial experience in editing as a member of the editorial board of *The Olden Years* from 1907 to 1908,⁵² and by 1909 he was already well established on the Russian art scene as an art critic and art historian. In 1906–08 he delivered lectures on world art history at the Society for Encouragement of the Arts; in 1909–1913, he published three volumes of his art criticism, *Pages of Art Criticism* (*Stranitsy khudozhestvennoi kritiki*), the sum of his works written between 1905 and 1913.⁵³ Following Diaghilev's example, Makovskii also organized art exhibits. In St Petersburg, he founded the Salon of 1909 (*Salon 1909 goda*),⁵⁴ an event that was followed by the launch of *Apollo*.⁵⁵ The following year he was appointed the head of the Russian department for the World Exhibit in Brussels (1910) and organized the exhibit of the World of Art in Paris (1910). In 1912 in St Petersburg, Makovskii curated the art show "100 Years of French Painting" ("Sto let frantsuzskoi zhivopisi").⁵⁶ Coming from an artistic family – although he never painted, but instead wrote poetry, which was published in *Apollo* – his main cultural contribution was publishing and editing art periodicals and writing art criticism.

Even before *Apollo* was launched, the well-educated and widely read progeny from the famous artistic family of the Makovskii, the thirty-two-year-old Sergei Makovskii, already had a sturdy reputation among the St Petersburg cultural elite. As a result, he was able to unite like-minded people, the best artists, graphic designers, writers and art critics of the day to participate in his ambitious project. Unified and inspired by the idea of Apollonianism, the editorial

52 F.M. Lur'e, comp., *Starye gody. Khronologicheskaiia rospis' soderzhaniia. 1907–1916* (Sankt-Petersburg: Izdatel'skii dom "Kolo", 2007).

53 See Sergei Makovskii, *Stranitsy khudozhestvennoi kritiki. Kniga pervaiia. Khudozhestvennoe tvorчество sovremennogo zapada* (Sankt-Petersburg: Knigizdatel'stvo "Panteon", 1909); Sergei Makovskii, *Stranitsy khudozhestvennoi kritiki. Kniga vtoraiia. Sovremennye russkie khudozhniki* (Sankt-Petersburg: Knigizdatel'stvo "Panteon", 1909), and Sergei Makovskii, *Stranitsy khudozhestvennoi kritiki. Kniga III* (Sankt-Petersburg: Izdanie "Apollona", 1913). The first volume was a collection of articles published in 1905–06, the second was a compilation of the works from 1907–08. The last volume compiled all his articles published in *Apollo*.

54 See Sergei Makovskii, *Na Parnase "Serebriannogo veka"* (Munkhen: Izdatel'stvo Tsentral'nogo Ob'edineniia Politicheskikh Emigrantov iz SSSR (TsOPE), 1962) 197.

55 Mickiewicz 75.

56 S. Zil'bershtein and V.A. Samkov, eds. and comps., *Valentin Serov v vospominaniakh, dnevnikakh i perepiskakh sovremennikov*, vol. 2, (Leningrad: Izdatel'stvo "Khudozhnik RSFSR", 1971) 402. The profit of the exhibition was donated to the Society of Defence and Preservation of the Monuments of Art and Antiquity in Russia (*Obshchestvo zashchity i sokhraneniia v Rossii pamiatnikov iskusstva i stariny*). See Zolotinkina.

team expressed a group identity that became the main driving force of the journal.

Apollo's Contributors: Creating a Group Identity

All the journals discussed in this book represented different kinds of "group identities" that were directly and indirectly reflected in their appearance and publications. The creation of a periodical ideology was a collective accomplishment, not to be credited merely to the journal editor or publisher. As was already stated, the *World of Art* served as a logical continuation of the meetings of the young "Pickwickians, from the banks of the Neva-river" (*nevskie pikvikiantsy*),⁵⁷ several like-minded young dilettantes who were developing a group identity for years before demonstrating it on the pages of the periodical. In contrast to the spontaneity of the *World of Art*, *Apollo* was organized by a group of experienced, mature people (some of them came out of the World of Art group and were participants of the eponymous periodical), who had already chosen art, literature, and art journalism as their profession. Launching the periodical was a result of Makovskii's successful endeavors to unite a group of people whose opinions coincided with his.

In *Apollo*, several people formed the core of the editorial team. Nikolai Gumilev (1886–1921) introduced the poet Innokentii Annenskii (1855–1909) to Makovskii in March 1909, soon after the idea of the new periodical was born and when the future editor started compiling materials for the first issue.⁵⁸ Later on, Makovskii would designate this meeting as a key moment in the launch of *Apollo*: Annenskii became the important older adviser that Makovskii believed he needed.⁵⁹ Unacknowledged during his lifetime, Annenskii was one of the key figures in the preparation of the first issue of *Apollo* before his untimely death a few weeks after the journal was launched.⁶⁰ As the translator of Euripides and author of "Neo-Classical" dramas, a philologist-Hellenist by education, and the director of the classical gymnasium in Tsarskoe Selo, Annenskii was one of the main initiators of the Apollonian principle in the periodical, and he contributed much to the development of that concept.

57 Benois attributed this title to the "society for self-education" (1890–1895) that preceded to the establishment of the World of Art group (See Benua, *Vozniknovenie* 9–10).

58 Lavrov and Timenchik 223.

59 Makovskii, *Portrety sovremennikov* 268–9. Also Makovskii devoted a chapter to Annenskii in his memoirs (See the chapter "Innokentii Annenskii – kritik" in Makovskii, *Na Parnase "Serebrianogo veka"* 123–142).

60 The third issue published his obituary. The first issue of the periodical was issued on October 15, 1909, and Annenskii died on November 30.

Mickiewicz reports that Annenskii "stood apart from the struggle for supremacy among the literary schools; he did not join any of the circles that formed around the various Symbolist *maîtres* of Petersburg or Moscow".⁶¹

Two other key contributors to the first issue were Benois and the Symbolist poet and philosopher Viacheslav Ivanov. Ivanov and Benois had the most substantial experience in journal publishing, since they both had participated in the *World of Art* and *The Golden Fleece*. Benois also participated in editing of the aforementioned art-historical periodicals *The Olden Years* and *Art Treasures of Russia*.

Ivanov, who was a significant authority in the literary milieu, took the lead in the literary section of *Apollo*. Makovskii had known Ivanov since 1903, when the poet came to St Petersburg after his prolonged trip to Italy and Greece, and in 1905 founded his famous so-called "tower" ("*bashnia*").⁶² The "tower" became the most fashionable salon in St Petersburg and hosted meetings for artists, philosophers and literati. In accordance with the ancient Greek and Roman manner, visitors were meant to lie on floor rugs surrounded by pillows, while Ivanov's wife Lidiia Zinov'eva-Annibal (1866–1907) greeted them dressed in a Greek or Roman-style peplum or tunic.⁶³ In St Petersburg the "tower" served as a substitute for the recently closed editorial office of the *World of Art* and, perhaps, played an equally important role in uniting the cultural elite, much as the recently founded editorial boards of *The Scales* and *The Golden Fleece* did in Moscow. In 1909, the "tower" was partially moved to the editorial office of *Apollo*.⁶⁴ At this point, it intermingled with Makovskii's Society of Enthusiasts of the Artistic Word (*Obshchestvo revnitelei khudozhestvennogo slova*).⁶⁵

Among the other members of the editorial team, Ivanov had the most extensive experience in studying and contemplating the Classics. He was a professional Classical philologist who had studied at the Frederick William

61 Mickiewicz 79.

62 The salon was dubbed the "tower" due to the location of Ivanov's apartment in the real tower of the building on Tavricheskaia Street in St Petersburg.

63 Mstislav Dobuzhinskii, "Viacheslav Ivanov i 'bashnia,'" *Vospominaniia* by M.V. Dobuzhinskii, ed. G.I. Chugunov (Moskva: Nauka, 1987) 273.

64 For more about Ivanov's "tower" and the literary associations connected to it, see in Manfred Shrubas's "Sredy Viacheslava Ivanova i sviazannye s nimi literaturnye ob'edineniia," *Viacheslav Ivanov: Tvorchestvo i sud'ba*, ed. A.A. Takho-Godi and E.A. Takho-Godi (Moskva: "Nauka", 2002) 177–186.

65 Makovskii, *Portrety sovremennikov* 290–1.

University (Friedrich-Wilhelms-Universität) in Berlin,⁶⁶ where in 1886 he joined the famous seminar of Theodor Mommsen, the foremost German historian of Ancient Rome. In 1895, he completed a dissertation in Latin, *On the Tax-Farming Companies of the Roman People* (*De societatibus vectigalium publicorum populi Romani*), which was published fifteen years later. Vasily Rudich points out that Mommsen's approval of Ivanov's dissertation provided the young Classicist with the prospect of a brilliant career in Germany. Ivanov, however, had chosen another path. Meanwhile, his dissertation made an impact on the early work of the archaeologist Mikhail Rostovtsev (Rostovzeff, 1870–1952), Ivanov's friend and colleague. Later, Ivanov would become disenchanted with Roman history and attracted to Greek philology. Ivanov also studied Sanskrit under de Saussure, and in 1903 he delivered series of lectures at the *Ecole Supérieure des Sciences Sociales* in Paris that were devoted to the religion of Dionysus and had great success.⁶⁷

Apollo, with its broad program of classical revival, offered more than just an opportunity to publish Ivanov's works. He was one of the most devoted Hellenists in the Russian cultural elite. By 1909 he had already written major works that reflected his Nietzschean Hellenism.⁶⁸ Nietzsche unquestionably influenced Ivanov's perception of the Dionysian. Ivanov described the difference between Nietzsche's understanding and his attitude toward Dionysus in his early work "Nietzsche and Dionysus". In terms of the relation to the Apollonian, Heinrich Stammler explained the core of the difference between Ivanov and Nietzsche:

Nietzsche had interpreted the Greek world view in terms of despair which through beauty tends to reconcile itself with life. But Ivanov did not want to persist in somber desperation, seeking consolation and redemption in the Apollonian appearance of the Beautiful. He would not

66 V.M. Tolmachev, "Salamandra v ognе. O tvorchestve Viach. Ivanova," *Rodnoe i vselenskoe* by Viacheslav Ivanov (Moskva: Respublika, 1990) 4.

67 Vasily Rudich, "Viacheslav Ivanov and Classical Antiquity," *Viacheslav Ivanov: Poet, Critic and Philosopher*, ed. Robert Louis Jackson and Lowry Nelson, Jr. (New Haven: Yale Center for International and Area Studies, 1986) 275–7.

68 "The Hellenistic Religion of the Suffering God" ("Ellinskaja religia stradaiushchego boga", 1903–05) – this work remained unpublished; "Nietzsche and Dionysus" ("Nitsche i Dionis" 1904), "Wagner and Dionysus's Act" ("Vagner i Dionisovo deistvo", 1905), "Of the Merry Craftsmanship and Smart Revelry" ("O veselom remesle i umnom veselii", 1907), "Sporades" ("Sporady", 1908). See Rudich 280. In 1923, Ivanov would publish the book *Dionysus and Pre-Dionysuscism* (*Dionis i pradiionisiistvo*). See its republication: Viacheslav Ivanov, *Dionis i pradiionisiistvo* (Sankt-Peterburg: Aletea, 2000).

evaluate beauty in merely phenomenal terms as appearance, for he saw in it a constitutive element of a higher reality, a theophany.⁶⁹

Ivanov collaborated in creating the first issue of the journal and advised Benois on his "In Expectation of the Hymn to Apollo"; indeed, his "theurgical" undertones sound in the prophetic style of Benois's message (discussion follows).⁷⁰ However, both Ivanov and Benois were enthusiastic about the journal only at the beginning; later they grew cool toward *Apollo*.⁷¹

The editorial team consisted of the most prominent artists, literati and critics of the day.⁷² Not all of them contributed regularly to *Apollo*, but the fact that Makovskii was able to unite the foremost cultural elite and obtain their consent to participate implied that the journal promised to be successful. *Apollo*'s first issue was international in outlook and published an announcement that the journal would issue monthly surveys of artistic and literary events in

69 Heinrich Stammer, "Viacheslav Ivanov and Nietzsche," *Viacheslav Ivanov: Poet, Critic and Philosopher*, ed. Robert Louis Jackson and Lowry Nelson, Jr. (New Haven: Yale Center for International and Area Studies, 1986) 391.

70 Koretskaia, "Apollon" 217.

71 Bogomolov assumes that Ivanov was unsatisfied with several articles in the first issues of the journal as well as with the "equivocal orientation of the editor-in-chief: Makovskii supported Ivanov in his speech calling him a genuine master, teacher and other honorable titles, but in reality he preferred to work with the authors from the other group". See Bogomolov's introduction to Bogomolov and Grechishkin 138.

72 When the first issue appeared, the editorial team was listed at the end of the periodical. The journal's subscription information stated that the editorial team would consist of the following sections and their members (more than participants in total 44 were mentioned): The Art Section included: Alexandre Benois, Léon Bakst, Ivan Bilibin, Konstantin Bogaevskii (1872–1943), Nadezhda Voitinskaia (1886–1965), Aleksandr Golovin, Mstislav Dobuzhinskii, Vasilii Kandinskii (1866–1944), Boris Kustodiev (1878–1927), Eugene Lanceray, Georgii Lukomskii (1884–1952), Elena Kiseleva (1878–1974), Nikolai Milioti, Dmitrii Mitrokhin (1883–1973), Nikolai Remizov, Nikolai Rerikh, Kuz'ma Petrov-Vodkin, Konstantin Somov, Dmitrii Stelletskii (1875–1947), Sergei Sudeikin, Aleksandr Shervashidze (1867–1968), Vladimir Shchuko (1878–1939), Aleksei Shchusev (1873–1949), Konstantin Iuon (1875–1958), Sergei Iaremich and others. The participants of the Literary Section were: Innokentii Annenskii, Valerii Briusov, Maksimilian Voloshin, Akim Volynskii (1861–1926), Viacheslav Ivanov, Kornei Chukovskii (1882–1969) and others. The Art Criticism department consisted of: Alexandre Benois, Nikolai Vrangeli, Léon Bakst, Igor Grabar', Vladimir Kurbatov (1878–1957), Georgii Lukomskii, Segrei Makovskii, A. Rostislavov and others; the Musical and Theatrical Sections were represented by Evgenii Braudo (1882–1939), Viacheslav Karatygin (1875–1925), Aleksandr Skriabin (1871–1915), Nikolai Evreinov (1879–1953), Vsevolod Meyerhold, Vladimir Nemirovich-Danchenko (1858–1943), Konstantin Stanislavskii (1863–1938) and others.

Russia, France, Poland, Germany, England and America. It was also announced that poetry, prose and plays by Russian and foreign writers (in Russian translation) would be printed, accompanied by drawings reproduced as phototypes, autotypes and lithographs.

The main contributors to the graphic design of the first *Apollo* issue were Bakst and Dobuzhinskii, both successful graphic artists, who had started their careers in the *World of Art* and continued in *The Golden Fleece*. While Bakst created the cover and title pages, Dobuzhinskii was responsible for the design of the drop capitals, frontispieces, and illustrations.

Apollonian / Dionysian

By announcing Apollonianism, the editorial board was alluding to Friedrich Nietzsche and his dichotomy of the Apollonian and the Dionysian. Nietzsche's ideas were appealing to the Russian cultural elite of the early twentieth century. However, in the last decade of the nineteenth century, the reception of the German philosopher's teachings was generally negative (with the exception of some works). As already mentioned, his philosophy had been considered harmful and was initially banned. By the beginning of the twentieth century, partly due to Vladimir Solov'ev's reaction,⁷³ Nietzsche became identified with the Antichrist. It was not until the first decade of the twentieth century that the response to Nietzsche turned more positive.⁷⁴

The first critical responses to Nietzsche were made through a juxtaposition of Nietzsche to Fedor Dostoevskii⁷⁵ and Tolstoi. The main popularizers of Nietzsche were Merezhkovskii, who linked Nietzsche and French aestheticism to Dostoevskii and Solov'ev; Ivanov, Blok and Belyi "developed an archetype of the Dionysian Christ";⁷⁶ Nikolai Berdiaev (1874–1948), Semen Frank and Lev Shestov highlighted the non-rationality of humanity and questioned the traditional concepts of good and evil in relation to Nietzsche's ideas.⁷⁷

73 Vladimir Solov'ev (1853–1900) was a philosopher, theologian, and Symbolist poet, who influenced the development of Russian Modernism. He participated in the *World of Art* until his untimely death in 1900.

74 Nel Grillaert, *What the God-Seekers Found in Nietzsche. The Reception of Nietzsche's "Übermensch" by the Philosophers of the Russian Religious Renaissance* (Amsterdam – New York: Rodopi, 2008) 5–6.

75 Grillaert 4.

76 Bernice Glatzer Rosenthal, "Introduction", *Nietzsche and Soviet Culture. Ally and Adversary*, ed. Bernice Glatzer Rosenthal (Cambridge: Cambridge University press, 1994) 2–3.

77 Rosenthal 3. See also the discussion about Belyi's infatuation with Nietzsche's works in the previous chapter.

The God-Seekers (*Bogoiskateli*)⁷⁸ and God-Builders (*Bogostroiteli*) constructed their apocalyptically oriented paradigms basing themselves on Nietzsche's ideas.⁷⁹ Merezhkovskii and Rozanov, who became the most prodigious Russian Modernist prophets of neo-pagan ideas, also employed Nietzsche's neo-paganism.

Nietzsche's *The Birth of Tragedy from the Spirit of Music* (1871), translated and first published in 1899, influenced the Russian reception of Nietzsche far more than any other of his works.⁸⁰ This text gained the status of a cultural "guide"⁸¹ and became the key text for Russian literary Symbolists offering them "an aesthetic justification of reality and human existence".⁸² In *The Birth of Tragedy* Nietzsche introduced the two opposing principles of Apollonianism and Dionysianism that became so fruitful for further interpretations. According to the philosopher, Apollo, the god of the sun, represents rationalism, harmony and dreams. His opposition, Dionysus, is the embodiment of orgiastic chaos and drunkenness. In creative practice, Apollo, the god of the plastic arts, brings clarity and praises eternal beauty, while Dionysus, the god of the non-plastic art of music, expresses an orgiastic stream of passion. Artistic ideals can be

78 The abovementioned Merezhkovskii, Gippius, Filosofov, Rozanov, Shestov, and others were known as the God-Seekers (*Bogoiskateli*). They organized Religious-Philosophical Meetings (*Religiozno-filosofskie sobraniia*) in 1901–1903 and published their views in the religious-philosophical journal *The New Way* and later in *The Questions of Life*. Their religious-philosophical views were based on the idea of creating a new God and searching new ways of understanding of God. The God-Builders (*Bogostroiteli*) appeared after the revolution of 1905 and combined the Marxist and Orthodox ideas together and assumed that a new God could be "built" by a powerful collective of labourers. They were Maksim Gor'kii (1868–1936), Anatolii Lunacharskii (1875–1933), Aleksandr Bogdanov (1873–1928) and others. Both the God-Seekers and God-Builders represented types of a theomachy (*bogoborchestvo*). See S. Vol'fon, "Bogoiskatel'stvo i bogostroitel'stvo," *Literaturnaia entsiklopediia v n tomakh*, t.1, eds. P.I. Lebedev-Polianskii, A.V. Lunacharskii, I.M. Nusinov, V.F. Pereverzev and I.A. Skrypnik (Moskva: Izd-vo Kom. Akad., 1930) 535–539.

79 Rosenthal 3–4. See also the detailed discussion of Nietzsche's responses in the last decade of the nineteenth century in Grillaert 24–36.

80 Rosenthal 15.

81 See the comments by Voinitskaia to Nitsche, "Rozhdenie tragedii, ili ellinstvo i pessimism" 531.

82 Grillaert 35. *The Birth of Tragedy* was first published by the publishing house of the Imperial Academy of Sciences in 1899 entitled *The Origin of Tragedy* (*Proiskhozhdenie tragedii*) in N.N. Polilov's translation; in 1902 the book was re-published in new translation of Iu.M. Antonovskii by M. Kliukin's publishing house in Moscow.

achieved only through linking the Apollonian mode to the Dionysian.⁸³ As Rose Pfeffer states,

The two art-sponsoring deities become symbols of the metaphysical principles of life and being; the two interacting artistic impulses, in their continuous evolution of Apollonian and Dionysian duality and their continuous reconciliation, are likened to the very forces of nature, which contain both decay and generation, both passing away and coming into being. Both art and nature work according to the same pattern, a pattern that Nietzsche calls tragic, consisting of two opposing yet complementary activities that inevitably belong together, eternally destroying and perishing and eternally creating and giving birth.⁸⁴

Nietzsche juxtaposed ancient Greek culture to the contemporary world that he saw as cut off from the aesthetic roots of the great Greek achievements and sinking into petty-bourgeois values. Thus, he promoted a revival of the pagan Greek virtues.⁸⁵ This Nietzschean Neo-Classical paganism became attractive for Russian literary Symbolists, who appreciated it by exalting the Dionysian principle and creating “a life-affirming and orgiastic art” and re-establishing collective myth-making (*mifotvorchestvo*).⁸⁶

Positioning themselves as vanguards, the Modernist art and literary journals popularized Nietzsche and his philosophy. The *World of Art* published Nietzsche's works as well as Solov'ev's criticism of the German philosopher; *The Golden Fleece* and *The Scales* published an interpretation of his philosophy by Symbolist writers. This almost inevitably led to *Apollo's* use of Nietzsche's symbolism. While many philosophers propagated the Dionysian mode, *Apollo's* editorial board created a myth based on the principle of Apollonianism.

“In Expectation of the Hymn to Apollo”

The ideology of Apollonianism was expressed in Benois's “In Expectation of the Hymn to Apollo” (“V ozhidanii gimna Apollonu”).⁸⁷ Its text resembled a

83 Fridrikh Nittsshe, “Rozhdenie tragedii iz dukha muzyki,” *Fridrikh Nitsshe i russkaia religioznaia filosofii. Tom 2. Perevody, issledovaniia, esse filosofov ‘serebrianogo veka’*, ed. and comp. Inna Voinitskaia (Minsk: Alkiona Pristsel's, 1996) 62–176.

84 Rose Pfeffer, *Nietzsche: Disciple of Dionysus* (Lewisburg: Bucknell University Press, 1972) 32–33.

85 Grillaert 146.

86 Grillaert 35.

87 Aleksandr Benua, “V ozhidanii gimna Apollonu,” *Apollon* 1 (1909): 5–11. Both Dmitriev and Lavrov state that initially the inaugural article was offered to Akim Volynski (Khaim Flekser, 1863–1926), the literary critic and writer, who declined this proposition. Volynskii

sermon. He seemed to be following Nietzsche and his call for a prophetic style as did his colleagues Merezhkovskii, Belyi, Ivanov and many other Russian literati: "prophecy" was already quite a popular mode for many contemporary writings as was an apocalyptic tone. Such a prophetic manner of articulating ideas was never typical for Benois, however. Nevertheless, here he preached as an oracle of Apollonianism. This appears to have been a deliberate attempt to express his ideas in the form of "religious" sermonizing and thereby announce the arrival of Apollo (and the journal) in portentous terms:

A god arrives and the earth groans, expelling the dead. The prophets and beasts arise everywhere to begin an emphatic fight. But the god who is transfigured and Glorious is closer. And it seems that the rising sun is not an avenger of Jehovah, not a sorrowful and dark face from the Byzantine icons, and not the ferocious Heracles of Michelangelo, but the bright God well-known and beloved since the ancient times, marvelously fearful and splendidly tender, effulgent and good. ... Allegedly, Dionysus, his brother, was crucified. Yes, this is true, he was. But he who was crucified already rose from the dead and threw himself into the crowd of those, who crucified him and made them drunk with his blood. He began the secret and joyful round dance (*khorovod*) and the universe shook from it, overthrowing the idols of lying gods. The universal bacchanalia, whilst wild and nightly, ungainly and even blasphemous, has already begun. But the Brother will arrive – commanded by fate – and the lustful disarray will turn into a harmonious dance, into real liturgy. From the fields and forests the feral thousands of the wild will return to the new sacred town.⁸⁸

employed Apollonian symbolism in his writings preceding the launch of *Apollo*. Dmitriev states that one of Volynskii's articles on Apollo (see A.L. Volynskii, "O russkom iskusstve," *Obozrenie teatrov* 322 (1908): 16–17) with its Apollonian mode might have influenced Benois (see Dmitriev 12–13). Makovskii relied on Volynskii, who, as was stated in the contemporary press, "was working intensively on the cycle of new works 'Apollo,' 'Dionysus' and 'Christ' and travelled to the East, Greece and Egypt to conduct his research". The book, however, was never published. A. Lavrov, "A. Volynskii i zhurnal 'Apollon'." *Russkie simvolisty: etudy i razyskaniia* by A. Lavrov (Moskva: Progress-Pleiada, 2007) 395–406.

- 88 Benua, "V ozhidanii gimna Apollonu" 5–6. Benois's "prophetic" preaching had solely artistic grounds; however, indirectly they may indicate Benois's reflection against the social depression, which defined St Petersburg after the revolution of 1905. As Mark Steinberg reports, at the turn of 1907 and 1908 in St Petersburg, "editorialists and columnists regularly complained of newly 'depressed' social mood" that continued in the next years (Steinberg 243). Observers of the public mood in the years following 1905 were stuck by ubiquity of *toska* (depression). Thus, Merezhkovskii, walking the street of St Petersburg after returning from abroad in 1908 (he had left at the end of 1905), perceived something

Apparently, Benois is referring to the Nietzschean duality of Apollo and Dionysus, but in contrast to the German philosopher, he establishes the supremacy of Apollo. If Nietzsche becomes the first disciple of Dionysus and expresses the “Dionysian faith,”⁸⁹ Benois claims that he is a disciple of Apollo and clearly proclaims his Apollonian devotion. The title page of the journal, which will be discussed shortly (Fig. 4.1), shows how this idea is articulated visually: Bakst’s Apollo is playing the lyre or zither; he chases away the satyrs, the servants of Dionysus and thereby announces the Apollonian rule. Even though Benois accepts Nietzsche’s conclusion that Apollonian and Dionysian artistic modes exist together (“The two divine brothers are really close to one to another; if they differ and the separation lies deeply between them, at the very bottom their roots are intertwined and joined together.”⁹⁰), he praises the eventual victory of Apollo’s authority over Nietzschean Dionysianism:

Tomorrow the new renaissance will approach. And many people *know* [Benois’s italics] this. But when tomorrow will come is unclear... Now the folly and orgies rule, it is a time of utmost brutality (*ozvereniia*) and suicidal despair. Perhaps the precipice (*pereval*) has not yet been crossed, and the darkness will be even darker and dawn will die out. But there, behind the horizon, the divine luminary will not stop; it will complete its orbit and will rise when its unpredictable time comes. This renaissance will be much more joyful and will differ from that which happened five centuries ago! ... The only hymn that is appropriate here is the creation of beauty and enlightening life with beauty. We should not only be obedient to inspiration to make paintings, write poems, and listen to the music born in our souls, but we have to make ourselves pleasing to the God of beauty.⁹¹

Nietzsche declared Dionysus the god of tragedy; Benois, however, in passages that will be quoted in the following section, proclaimed dance as the Apollonian art.

Dance: The Apollonian Gesamtkunstwerk

It appears that in Russian Modernist art criticism, Benois was one of the first to include dance among Richard Wagner’s concept of *Gesamtkunstwerk*, a category

new: the “terrible *toska* on people’s faces”. The Marxist philosopher Georgii Plekhanov noticed the same in 1909: “In contemporary Russia there are many melancholic (*toskuiushchie*) people, and still more are being led toward *toska*” (Steinberg 247).

89 Bruce Ellis Benson, *Pious Nietzsche. Decadence and Dionysian Faith* (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2008) 193–4.

90 Benua, “V ozhidanii gimna Apollonu” 6.

91 Benua, “V ozhidanii gimna Apollonu” 6–7.

so productively employed by many artists.⁹² It was Benois who convinced Diaghilev to show the Russian ballet in Europe. Alexander Schouvaloff reports that initially Diaghilev's sympathies were directed more toward opera. However, Benois persuaded him that ballet had great potential for creating the "total artwork".⁹³ In the inaugural issue of *Apollo* Benois asked rhetorically:

To which of the Gods does dance belong? Who is leading the round dance (*khorovod*), Apollo or Dionysus? Or do they do it by turns, complementing each other? Maenads of one god turn into Muses of another one, but both gods are dancing. What is dance? Is it only a rhythmic movement accompanied by certain music? A part of life, a fit, or can dance become (must become) the rhythm of the whole of life, an inner transformation of entire human activities and the eternal miracle of beauty.⁹⁴

Apollo consistently published critical articles and reviews of ballet productions.⁹⁵ The *World of Art's* main artists, and Benois among them, had participated in various ballet productions as theatre set designers since 1901⁹⁶ and continued to work for Diaghilev's Russian Seasons (1909–1929),⁹⁷ which began

92 In July 1909 Benois wrote to Makovskii: "I cannot refuse to start the journal with Apollo dancing" (qtd. in Dmitriev, "Apollon" 8).

93 See Alexander Schouvaloff, "Diaghilev's Ballets Russes: The First Phase," *Diaghilev. Creator of the Ballets Russes. Art. Music. Dance*, ed. Ann Kodicek (London: Barbican Art Gallery & Lund Humphries Publishers, 1996) 87.

94 Benua, "V ozhidanii gimna Apollonu" 7.

95 See, for example, S.A. "Tantsy v 'Kniaze Igore,'" *Apollon* 1 (1909): 29–30; Georgii Lukomskii, "Plasticheskie tantsy," *Apollon* 3 (1909): 40–41; Iakov Tugenhold, "Russkii balet v Parizhe," *Apollon* 8 (1910): 69–71; Andrei Levinson, "O novom balete," *Apollon*, 8 (1911): 30–49; *Apollon* 9 (1911): 16–29, etc. For an analysis of the articles devoted to dance see: Pavel Dmitriev, "Zhurnal 'Apollon' v poiskakh plasticheskogo ideala," *Ot slov k telu: sbornik statei k 60-letiiu Iuriiia Tsviana*, eds. Aleksandr Lavrov, A. Ospovat and R. Timenchik (Moskva: Novoe literaturnoe obozrenie, 2010) 31–46.

96 Benois was involved in a collective design project for ballet first in 1901: the design for L. Delibes's *Sylvia*, which involved the participation of Benois, Bakst, Korovin, Lanceray, and Serov under Diaghilev's direction (Pruzhan 54–55). Unfortunately, the ballet was not produced due to the Mariinskii Theatre's prima Matil'da Kshesinskaia's intrigues. It was eventually staged, but the *World of Art* artists refused to participate in the design production; that negative experience reflected on Diaghilev's theatrical career and triggered unenthusiastic moods in Benois and Bakst for several years (Benua, *Moi vospominaniia* vol. 2, 369).

97 In one of his later letters from 1928, Diaghilev recalled the moment when he was converted to ballet: "From Opera to Ballet is but a step. At that time there were more than 400 ballet dancers on the roster of the Imperial theatres. They all had a remarkably good training, and they danced the traditional classical ballets... I could not help observing,

the same year that *Apollo* was launched. The ballets *Le Pavillon d'Armide* (*Pavil'on Armidy*), *Cleopatra* (*Kleopatra*), *Les Sylphides* (*Sil'fida*) and the dance performance *Polovtsian Dances* (*Polovetskie pliaski*) from the opera *Prince Igor* (*Kniaz' Igor'*) and *Le Festin* (*Pir*) staged in 1909 in France showed that the opportunities for a synthesis of the arts lay in attracting professional artists to participate in stage and costume design.⁹⁸ The Russian Seasons created a new form of performance different from the traditional Petersburg ballet.

In early twentieth-century Russia, ballet techniques were highly developed thanks to the leading choreographers Marius Petipa (1818–1910), Lev Ivanov (1834–1901) and Aleksandr Gorskii (1871–1924). However, in comparison to the intense development of other theatrical genres, such as opera and drama, ballet was stuck in old classical forms; the renewal of ballet was initiated by Michel Fokine (Mikhail Fokin, 1880–1942), who suggested an innovative approach to the expression of emotions in dance. His new conception also required a reformation of theatre set design and the acceptance of theatrical design as a significant constituent of a “total” ballet production.⁹⁹ His collaboration with the World of Art artists began in 1907 with the staging of *Le Pavillon d'Armide*, where Benois was the designer and librettist. Later Benois would acknowledge that that was the ballet which “started everything” and created the grounds for the future Russian Seasons.¹⁰⁰ According to Benois, the premiere was very successful with the public, and Diaghilev, who met him after the performance, exclaimed: “This is the thing that has to be shown in Europe”. Thus, the idea of showing Russian theatre, and ballets in particular, in Europe was born.¹⁰¹

Benois explained the World of Art members' fervent fascination with ballet by saying that this art was “one of the most consistent and integral expressions of the idea of *Gesamtkunstwerk*”; and to realize Wagner's concept, Benois

however, that among the younger members of the St Petersburg ballet, a sort of reaction to the classical tradition, which Petipa so jealously preserved, was beginning to make itself felt. From that moment, I began wondering whether it would be possible to create a number of short new ballets, which besides being of artistic value, would link the three main factors, music, decorative design, and choreography far more closely than even before” (qtd. in Schouvaloff 87).

98 Militsa Pozharskaia, “Diaghilev and the Artists of the *Saisons Russes*,” *Diaghilev. Creator of the Ballets Russes. Art. Music. Dance*, ed. Ann Kodicek (London: Barbican Art Gallery & Lund Humphries Publishers, 1996) 60.

99 Pruzhan 124–125.

100 Benua, *Moi vospominaniia* vol. 2, 468.

101 Benua, *Moi vospominaniia* vol. 2, 472–3.

asserted, his "generation was ready to give up their souls (*polozhit' dushu*)".¹⁰² In fact, the revolution in ballet happened not in the milieu of professional dancers, but in the circle of artists that according to Benois, "was governed by the idea of *art as a totality*". This happened, as Benois noted, only because "several artists [of the World of Art] and musicians *wanted to see* [Benois's italics] a more integral embodiment of their theatrical dreams".¹⁰³

The notion of Apollonianism as articulated by *Apollon* continued to be influential among the Russian art and dance circles and cultural elite for years. Almost two decades later, in 1928, George Balanchine (Georgii Balanchivadze, 1904–1983) staged the eponymous ballet *Apollon*¹⁰⁴ composed by Igor Stravinskii (1881–1971) for a music festival at the Library of Congress in Washington D.C. that explicitly embodied the Apollonian principle in dance.¹⁰⁵ From the moment the newly interpreted Nietzschean conception of the Apollonian and Dionysian struggle was transferred by Benois into the sphere of dance, it began to have an influence on the development of ballet.

Art as Theurgy

In Benois's allegorical article "In the Expectation of the Hymn to Apollo", art becomes an act of worshipping Apollo. "Art is not for art's sake, since art is heaven-born [from God] (*ot Boga*), it exists for God and as a reward to him. Art is a language with which humankind speaks to the celestials, so we have to learn this language without using foreign terms".¹⁰⁶ Benois's metaphorical

102 Aleksandr Benua, "Vospominaniia o baletе," *Moi vospominaniia* by Aleksandr Benua, vol. 2, (Moskva: Izdatel'stvo: Nauka, 1980) 540.

103 Benua, "Vospominaniia o baletе" 540. Dance in Russia was also significantly influenced by Isadora Duncan (1877–1927), who visited St Petersburg in 1907 and gave several performances there. In 1908, Volynskii would publish an article about her dance, saying that while he is looking at her dance, "he prays to Apollo". Qtd. in Dmitriev 13; also see Akim Volynskii's article "O tantsakh Dulkan" in *Obozrenie teatrov* 323 (1908): 12.

104 Scholl, "From *Apollon* to *Apollo*" 82–96.

105 Later in his memoirs, Stravinskii would explain his position toward the Apollonian in ballet: "For here, in classical dancing, I see the triumph of studied conception over vagueness, of the rule over the arbitrary, of order over the haphazard. I am thus brought face to face with the eternal conflict in art between the Apollonian and Dionysian principles. The latter assumes ecstasy to be the final goal – that is to say, the losing of oneself – whereas art demands above all the full consciousness of the artist. There can, therefore, be no doubt as to my choice between the two. And if I appreciate so highly the value of classical ballet, it is not simply a matter of taste expression of the Apollonian principle" (qtd. in Scholl, "From *Apollon* to *Apollo*" 90–91).

106 Benua, "V ozhidanii gimna Apollonu" 8.

language refers to the contemporary situation of art: "In our times the arts produce a heavy putrid smell".¹⁰⁷ Benois considers that due to current neglect of the preceding achievements in art, contemporary art was sinking in the darkness of the Dionysian ("We are lost and sinking deeper and deeper. Should we drown, though, finally, should we? Should we be cowardly and give way to the despair of falling into the Beast's clutches?"). In general, however, Benois's perspectives are optimistic: "In the future there is no death and darkness, but life and enlightenment".¹⁰⁸ To escape from darkness, artists should pray, so the "Light-giver (*Svetodatel'*) [Apollo] would request the sacred sacrifice".¹⁰⁹

The Neo-Classicist tendency of the eighteenth century was not the right path for art, according to Benois. He considered it as a mere mimicry of Antiquity. The real achievements, he felt, were attained before Neo-Classicism and in art that did not look directly to the classical models. In this context Benois praises Baroque and Rococo art, which celebrated the great beauty of life: "It was great beauty before this period [Neo-Classicism], but it was too childish and of a prodigal beauty (the profligate children created art of scrolls and curves, powder and switches), but even so, humankind lived in beauty".¹¹⁰ In Benois's view, Neo-Classicism moved art from everyday life into the icy spheres of aesthetics. In copying Classical models, he felt, art development took the wrong path as it led to stagnation and the proliferation of pedantry. Benois desired to escape "stuffy 'aesthetism'" and bring art to the real world: "I would like to make beauty alive and common again; I would like to live in beauty and not just worship the beautiful and dead things. ... Not just beautiful holidays are needed, but beautiful weekdays as well".¹¹¹

Benois's other concern was art creation and how contemporary artists treated art and the process of art making. He considered that artists do not treat art as a mystery anymore; instead, self-irony and skepticism prevail when they create their pieces. The art world, he felt, must outgrow this ironic attitude toward art creation and artists now have to compose "hymns to art".¹¹² Toward the end of his article, Benois tends to be even more poetic. The critic appeals to artists to have faith in "His", i.e. Apollo's,¹¹³ existence: Apollo never abandoned humanity. "He" himself was forgotten and not recognized (*priniali*

107 Benua, "V ozhidanii gimna Apollonu" 8.

108 Benua, "V ozhidanii gimna Apollonu" 9.

109 Benua, "V ozhidanii gimna Apollonu" 9.

110 Benua, "V ozhidanii gimna Apollonu" 9.

111 Benua, "V ozhidanii gimna Apollonu" 10.

112 Benua, "V ozhidanii gimna Apollonu" 10.

113 In his article Benois consistently uses pronoun "He" [i.e. Apollo] capitalized.

za drugogo) by humankind. Now, Benois proclaims, everybody has to remember Apollo again. In the final passages he again refers to dance and the body: "We have to remember the body. We have to prepare it, it has to light up with beauty and has to begin serving Him..."¹¹⁴

Benois not only expressed the editorial board's message, but his own vision. Indeed, he was a disciple of Apollo, highly valuing order and hierarchy. Living in Versailles in 1905–06, Benois had written his aforementioned article "The Artistic Heresies", which was subsequently published in *The Golden Fleece* (no. 2, 1906). In that article, he expressed his view on modern art's abandonment of "order" and "benchmarks".¹¹⁵ From his moralistic point of view, European art was losing its spiritual discipline and was falling into chaos and "shapelessness".¹¹⁶ Benois expressed his attitude concerning the art of previous generations, his anxiety about artistic anarchy leading to the obliteration of art and urged the new generation of artists to be guided by the order that had governed the art of the past. To a certain extent, "In Expectation of a Hymn to Apollo" echoed these earlier ideas that Benois had expressed in 1906. In 1909, however, it became a collective "call for order" articulated by *Apollo*.

Apollonian Satire: "The Bees and Wasps of Apollo"

In a completely different mode, the discussion of Apollonianism was continued in the satirical section "The Bees and Wasps of *Apollo*" ("Pchely i osy Apollona").¹¹⁷ The title referred to the ability of wasps to sting and of bees to work and create, now employed in a metaphorical sense.¹¹⁸ The section contained an ironic dialogue titled "The Tedious Conversation" ("Skuchnyi razgovor").¹¹⁹ The genre of dialogue was not very common in Russian art periodicals. It seems that the form of "conversation" was first implemented by Solov'ev in his book *Three Conversations* (*Tri razgovora*),¹²⁰ which was first published in 1900 and made a tremendous impact on the cultural elite, and was now re-invented by *Apollo*. This type of "dialogue", which does not represent a dispute, but rather an exchange of views, goes back to the Classic Platonic dialogues.¹²¹

114 Benua, "V ozhidanii gimna Apollonu" 11.

115 Benua, "Khudozhestvennye eresi" 80.

116 Iakimovich 95.

117 This satirical section was repeated just two times after in no 3, 1909 and in no 12, 1910.

118 For other references, see Dmitriev, 'Pchely i osy Apollona': K voprosu o formirovaniia estetiki zhurnala".

119 "Skuchnyi razgovor," *Apollon* 1 (1909): 79–84.

120 See Vladimir Solov'ev, *Tri razgovora* (N'iu Iork: Izdatel'stvo im. A. Chekhova, 1954).

121 Kreid, 190.

The dialogue was designed for expressing the various interpretations of Apollonianism as expressed by members of the periodical; thus it might be seen as resembling conversations in Ivanov's "tower" or in the editorial office. The anonymous participants of the conversation, the Professor, Philosopher, Journalist, Artist, Literature-Lover, Young Composer, Skeptical Lady and Poet, discuss the goals of the new publication.¹²² Such a "masquerade", with its play with identities and names, was one of the idiosyncratic characteristics of Russian Modernism.

The meaning of the "conversation" was to articulate the vision of Apollonianism and demonstrate to the reader that the Apollonian is not limited to a single opinion, but can be seen from various points of view and represents an acknowledgement of a multiplicity of voices within the group identity. It seems, however, that the key idea of Apollonianism that was asserted by the journal was uttered not by the Professor or the Literature-Lover, but by the Journalist, who stated: "Apollo is not just the god of culture; he is the symbol of our [i.e. of the members of the journal, like-minded people and the adherents of the "return to order"] difficult, even painstaking but steady progress and, subsequently, of struggle and our achievements".¹²³

Kirill Taranovskii interprets this "conversation" as a discussion saturated with Masonic¹²⁴ symbolism that is expressed via the use of such aphorisms as

122 Lavrov and Timenchik state that the invention of the personages belonged to Mikhail Kuzmin (1872–1936) who did the final editing of the "conversation". They attribute the passages of the Professor to Annenskii and consider that the mask of the Philosopher was Ivanov's. (See Introduction and footnote 22 in Lavrov and Timenchik 228). The Artist expressed the position of Benois, and Makovskii may have been hiding under the mask of the Literature-Lover. See Taranovskii, 417–19. In regards to the other masks, a number of other possible decipherings have been proposed. For example, Kirill Taranovskii presumes that the Poet could be the guise of Andrei Belyi. He suggests that the Skeptical Lady could be Marina Ryndina, the wife of Makovskii, or Sofia Tolstaia, the wife of Aleksei Tolstoi (Taranovskii 418). Mickiewicz believes that the Journalist was Valerii Briusov and assumes that the Skeptical Lady was Kuzmin's guise (Mickiewicz 94). Finally, Kreid considers that the Skeptical Lady was Lidiia Dmitrieva, the future Cherubina de Gabriak, one of the most successful examples of mythologizing in Russian Modernism that happened in *Apollo* (Kreid 190). About Cherubina see Maksimilian Voloshin, "Istoriia Cherubiny," Maksimilian Voloshin, *Izbrannoe. Stikhotvoreniia. Vospominaniia. Peregipska*, eds. and comps. V.P. Kupchenko and Z.D. Davydov (Minsk: Mastatskaia litaratura, 1993) 180–196.

123 "Skuchnyi razgovor" 82.

124 It is known that the first Masonic lodges were introduced to Russia in the eighteenth century, but were closed after the December revolt of 1825 and reopened after 1905. See Nina Berberova, *Liudi i lozhi. Russkie masony XX stoletii* (New York: Russica Publishers, Inc., 1986) 15.

"Apollo smiles not to the honour of the laureate, but to the eagerness of the student" and "the right to dream about mastery is gained only in the title of apprentice" (in the words of the Professor). Also he notices a number of other terms that refer to Masonic symbolism, such as "hierarchy", "workshop", "temple", "portico", or "brotherhood".¹²⁵ Taranovskii refers to the fact that already in 1907–8 several Masonic lodges had been founded in Russia. According to the scholar, the "conversation" (and the Apollonianism to a certain extent) can be seen as an expression of Russian Freemasonry.¹²⁶ The ideas of Freemasonry did influence the Russian cultural elite; hence such a play with occult symbolism might be an expression of sympathy for and interest in the secret society with its strong hierarchical order.¹²⁷

Articulating a Paradigm for Book Art: Alexandre Benois's "The Objectives of Graphic Art"

As will be shown in the next part of this chapter, *Apollo's* graphic design style represented a new paradigm of the architectonics of art periodicals. Before the analysis of the paratextual qualities of *Apollo* begins, it is necessary to delineate the theoretical grounds of graphic design and book illustration as established in Russia in the late 1900s and early 1910s. Such a discussion will help us to understand the changes in approaches to graphic design that happened since the *World of Art* set the stage for fine publishing and appreciation of high quality printing.

There are no available publications on graphic art or bookmaking by Makovskii from the period preceding the early 1910s or concurrent to the

125 Taranovskii 419–20. Kreid attributed the same terms to the poetic vocabulary of Gumilev and the structure of his Shop of Poets (*Tsekh poetov*, 1911–1914) and ascribed creation of the "conversation" to Gumilev, who intensively participated in *Apollo* (Kreid 191). Taranovskii extensively criticized this assumption.

126 Taranovskii 420. Oleg Platonov provides the complete gallery of Russian Freemasonry; however, he does not include Annenskii into this list. (Oleg Platonov, *Ternoviye venetsy Rossii. Tainaia istoriia masonstva. 1731–1996*, 12 April, 2010 <<http://www.rus-sky.com/history/library/plat1-1.htm>>). The only names that could be associated with Masonic lodges around 1900 are Belyi, Blok and Briusov, who were the members of the lodge "Lucifer". Benois is also on the list; however, it is not clear if he became a member of Freemasonry around 1900 or after his immigration to France in 1926.

127 In the future, after his emigration from Russia, Makovskii would become a Freemason; in the 1930s he became a member of the Paris lodge "Jupiter". See Nikolai Bogomolov, *Russkaia literatura nachala xx veka i okkul'tizm. Issledovaniia i materialy* (Moskva: Novoe literaturnoe obozrenie, 2000) 444.

period of the launching of *Apollo*. His earliest extant publication devoted to graphic design is the foreword in the book *Contemporary Russian Graphic Art* (*Sovremennaia russkaia grafika*) written by Nikolai Radlov (1889–1942). It was edited by Makovskii and published in 1917,¹²⁸ when *Apollo* was still appearing. In his editor's foreword Makovskii says nothing about book art as a collaboration between designer and author, nor about book construction and simplicity, focusing mostly on graphic techniques and styles. He praises, however, the decorative approach of the artists in the World of Art group and the retrospective nostalgic dreams about the past mirrored in their graphic designs that "breathe with eighteenth-century engravings, beaded bookmarks, flowers dried in the old folios, sweet patterned tatters of antiquary, a grandfather's bureau, where you could occasionally find a Masonic ring, jasper seal, tiny powder-box with mirror and tied up batch of old letters".¹²⁹ What Makovskii especially valued in the *World of Art*, and strove for in *Apollo*, was the "retrospective aspect", understood as a "return to the realm of the eighteenth century, the Empire Style (*ampir*), and to the 1830s", which leads to "re-establishing the graphic art tradition that was lost in the preceding decades".¹³⁰

As was already mentioned, in nineteenth-century Russia, graphic art was not considered a serious art genre. Appreciation of graphic art and book and periodical design, as discussed earlier, came only with the *World of Art*, whose artists elevated the art of the book and the status of graphic design. Benois, one of the organizers of the group and its main theorist,¹³¹ was a prolific graphic designer himself, involved in bookmaking – and not only from a theoretical perspective. By the time of his participation in *Apollo*, he already had illustrated Aleksandr Pushkin's *The Bronze Horseman* (*Mednyi vsadnik*, 1903, the first edition) and *The Queen of Spades* (*Pikovaia dama*, 1905), and the *ABC-book in Pictures* (*Azbuka v kartinkakh*, 1904) for children, and contributed

128 The book, Nikolai Radlov, *Sovremennaia russkaia grafika*, ed. Sergei Makovskii (Petrograd: Izd-vo "Svobodnoe iskusstvo", 1917) was an extended version of the article published in *Apollo* in 1913, Nikolai Radlov, "Sovremennaia russkaia grafika i risunok," *Apollo* 6 (1913): 5–24 and *Apollo* 7 (1913): 5–18.

129 Sergei Makovskii, "Ot sostavitelia," *Sovremennaia russkaia grafika* by Nikolai Radlov, ed. Sergei Makovskii (Petrograd: Izd-vo Svobodnoe iskusstvo: Khudozhestvenno-graficheskoe zavedenie "Iunior", 1917) XVII. The text may have been written in 1914 for the catalogue of the exhibit of contemporary Russian graphic art. See Sergei Makovskii, *Der Moderne buchschmuck in Russland* (St. Petersburg: Druck der Gesellschaft R. Golike u. A. Willborg, 1914).

130 Makovskii, *Na Parnase* "Serebrianogo veka" 291–2.

131 See the chapter on the *World of Art*.

to the graphic design of the *World of Art* and *The Golden Fleece*. Therefore it is no surprise that the first article dedicated to graphic art, bookmaking and its objectives published in late Imperial Russia came not from Makovskii's pen, but from that of Benois. He influenced Makovskii and his opinion undoubtedly affected the look of *Apollo*. His concern about graphics and book art arose within the context of the publishing of the *World of Art* and by 1909 had significantly matured to be expressed in his seminal article "The Objectives of Graphic Art" ("Zadachi grafiki").¹³²

Benois's article, however, was not published in one of the main centers of the Russian Empire, such as St Petersburg or Moscow; moreover, it was not published in *Apollo*. It came out in the Kiev (Kyiv) periodical *Art and Printing* (*Iskusstvo i pechatnoe delo*, 1909–1910) published by the Ukrainian Vasyl' Kul'zhenko (1865–1964).¹³³ Indeed, book and periodical production issues, in addition to questions about the proliferation of reproduction techniques, were significant in all major cities of the Russian Empire, where by the end of the nineteenth century printing had become an essential part of an intensively developing urban life, which came with an ever-growing reading audience and demand for new and varied publications. The article was available in St Petersburg and known by graphic artists there and by Makovskii himself: Kiev (Kyiv) was an intensively growing cultural centre with art events that were regularly chronicled in *Apollo*. The article was published in 1910, only months after the launch of *Apollo*, and therefore likely written around the date *Apollo* came out or even earlier, when the conception of the journal was just developing. Against the background of the graphic arts revival, this article was very significant in terms of expressing theoretical concerns about graphic arts and bookmaking. It represented a completely different point of view to Diaghilev's earlier "Illustrations to Pushkin" (1899) or the articulation of Symbolist "synthetist" ideas by Blok in 1905 in *The Golden Fleece*. It did not reverberate with the Mallarméan concept of "parallel text" either. In this seminal text, Benois expressed a "different" idea of materiality and word-image intermediality, making book design and appearance subordinate to textual meaning.

132 Aleksandr Benua, "Zadachi grafiki," *Iskusstvo i pechatnoe delo* 2–3 (1910): 41–48.

133 Stefan Kul'zhenko (1837–1905), the father of Vasyl' Kul'zhenko founded his printing press in 1874. From 1887, his printing house published fine press editions. His son Vasyl' Kul'zhenko inherited the printing house and issued the periodical *Art and Printing*. See Artur Rudzitskii, comp., *Zhurnaly "Iskusstvo i pechatnoe delo", "Iskusstvo. Zhivopis'. Grafika. Khudozhestvennaia pechat", "Iskusstvo v luzhnoi Rossii". Ukazatel' soderzhaniia* (Kiev, 1991): i–viii.

Benois's article expressed his ideas on book design through the metaphor of comparing the construction of the book with architecture.¹³⁴ "Architecture" as the most "material" spatial art refers to the materiality of the book. The key concepts of the article will help to understand *Apollo's* "restrained" graphic design and unassuming appearance in comparison to its predecessors, especially the luxurious *The Golden Fleece*.

In his article, Benois asserted: "Russian books and illustrations from the 1860s to the 1890s represent a demonstration of bad taste and even more, the display of negligence and indifference. Nowadays, owing to the undertakings of Diaghilev's *World of Art*, we are experiencing the golden age of graphic art".¹³⁵ In his opinion expressed in 1910, Russian bookmakers had still not achieved the same level of quality as European publishers and graphic artists:

Western bookmaking is superior to its Russian equivalent. Germany and England are especially noteworthy rivals in printing. While finesse and virtuosity in graphic art is attracted to high-quality bookmaking, our wonderful graphic artists waste their energy decorating trashy paper (*driannuiu bumagu*). They are forced to intertwine their vivid and bright drawings with lifeless banal columns of typesetting which are printed with cheap ink; nonetheless, they come out victorious.¹³⁶

The example of Western book production was foremost in Benois's mind. He scorned the dilettantism of the Russian Academy of Arts and the lack of teaching methodology in the Academy's graphic arts classes. His main point was to proclaim that graphic design was

a medium that requires the greatest moderation (*sderzhannost'*), the most subordination (*podchinenie*), and integrity. Freedom, which is acceptable and even desirable in paintings or drawings created independently as studio artworks, is not suitable in illustration and book decoration, as the artist here depends on another art [literature]. Even if he is not obliged to be fully subordinate to it, he must remember the necessity of bringing into harmonious unity his work with the one [the literary

¹³⁴ Benua, "Zadachi grafiki" 44.

¹³⁵ Benua, "Zadachi grafiki" 41.

¹³⁶ Benua, "Zadachi grafiki" 42.

text] that is to be illustrated (*neobkhodimosti garmonichnogo sochetaniia svoei raboty s toi, v kotoruiu on prizvan voiti*).¹³⁷

Benois compared the book to a small building in which the wall painting had to correspond to the architectural composition of the entire building. In view of this metaphor, Benois expressed the significance of the materiality of the book and the need for it to correspond to the textual domain. He asserted that paratextual characteristics (to use Genette's, not Benois's terminology) had to defer to the textual message:

Graphic art includes the illustration and decoration of the book. Both have to serve the book, and not play an independent role. That is why it is important for the graphic artist to rigorously examine himself to discover whether he finds in his soul vivid comments to the illustrated work of literature and understands it. If he realizes that he cannot "see" the text in vibrant visual images, then he must refuse to continue illustrating. Only if he feels a high creative potential, even higher than that expressed in the text, might he persist (sometimes, there is no other way to reveal your creative vigor). But even if the artist is only a decorator, he must remember the integrity of the book. He must acknowledge the fact that his role is subordinate, and that his role can become a model only if he is able to create the beautification in correspondence with the text.¹³⁸

In the following passage Benois emphasizes the architectonic characteristics of the book as material object:

Still, in decorating the book, we must not forget its architecture. It is not enough to create a title page, vignettes, and end pieces. More important are the problems associated with the so-called "planning" of the book. A good architect is recognized by the layout of the erected building, by the wittiness of its combinations, and the anatomy of the entire construction. ... The same is true of the artist who is working on the book; first he must pay attention to the major requirements of its construction: its formatting, quality, surface and colour of paper; but also the allocation and correlation of empty and filled spaces, the font, pagination, edges and binding of the book, etc. The book can be beautiful without a single

¹³⁷ Benua, "Zadachi grafiki" 42.

¹³⁸ Benua, "Zadachi grafiki" 44–45.

decoration and vice versa – all embellishments would be pointless if the designer forgets the main requirements of his job.¹³⁹

Benois compares the mission of the graphic designer to the task of the architect, and bookmaking to the erection of a building. At this point it is crucial to remember that William Morris had already used the term “architecture” in regard to the ideal book production.¹⁴⁰ While Morris rediscovered “the fundamental structure principles of the medieval book”,¹⁴¹ Benois admired the old masters’ work, but thought that contemporary book designers should refrain from “the imitation of old methods, but use them [creatively]”. He maintained that contemporary designers had to employ photomechanical reproduction in the periodical press; while in book production they needed to return to the old techniques, engraving copper plates and wooden blocks¹⁴² to return to fine book publishing.

This Kiev article was one of Benois’s crucial contributions to the general development of book art in late Imperial Russia. He set the theoretical and aesthetical grounds not only for the *World of Art*, but for *Apollo* too. For the latter, Benois wrote the editorial statement article and set the stage for the appreciation of book “architecture” and influenced the editor-in-chief Makovskii.

139 Benua, “Zadachi grafiki” 44–45.

140 William Morris, *The Ideal Book. Essays and Lectures on the Arts of the Book*, ed. William S. Peterson (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1982) 67. Indeed, Benois did not attend Morris’s lecture “The Ideal Book” delivered to the Bibliographical Society on June 19, 1893 in London. And it is hardly possible that he would have been able to read it when it was published later in *Transactions of the Bibliographical Society* No 1 (1893). But in traveling throughout Europe and living there for years, Benois kept his eyes open to all new ideas. Thus, he might have heard Morris’s metaphorical comparison of the body of the book to architecture as, by the end of the first decade of the twentieth century, such an idea could have been spread by word of mouth. Moreover, later in his memoirs *The Appearance of the World of Art*, Benois would quote his letter to E.K. Chetvertinskaia, the companion of Princess Tenisheva and the passionate participant in all Tenisheva’s initiatives. In this correspondence from April 1898 Benois wrote about the program of the *World of Art*: “In art industry we need to avoid the pretentious, wild, morbid and intentional, but bring to life, as did Morris, the principle of serene expediency – to put it differently – the principle of genuine beauty”. See Benua, *Vozniknovenie* 31. Cf. also the article “The Book and its Design” by Theo van Doesburg published in *Der Sturm* in 1928, where the author also compares book with architecture. See Theo Van Doesburg, “The Book and its Design,” *Design Issues* 9/2 (Autumn, 1993): 80–82.

141 See “Introduction by the Editor” in Morris xvi.

142 Benua, “Zadachi grafiki” 46.

Apollo and its Textual and Paratextual Standards: Materiality, Archeology of the Visual and Apollonianism

Materiality, the Title and the Cover Page

Readers who held *Apollo* in their hands must have been pleased with its convenient, compact format: at 22.5 × 20 cm (changed in 1911 to 24 × 20 cm), it made reading easier in comparison to the big folio-size formats of the *World of Art* (31 × 34 cm) and *The Golden Fleece* (32.5 × 30 cm). The readers of the latter journals would not have been able to read them comfortably while relaxing in an arm-chair; rather, it was assumed that they would read them sitting at a desk or table, carefully turning each page – something all serious subscribers likely did, since bibliophile culture in late Imperial Russia assumed that the process of reading would happen in a specially defined room of the house, the “library” (*biblioteka*) or “study” (*kabinet*) that was dedicated exclusively to reading or letter-writing. *Apollo*’s size even provided an opportunity to read while traveling by train, for example, from St Petersburg to Moscow and back, since now the art journal became portable and could be placed in a travelling case.¹⁴³

The editorial team of *Apollo* followed *The Scales* and *The Golden Fleece* in choosing a metaphorical/mythological title for the art periodical. However, we have little information about whose decision it was to name the journal after the Greek god. In his letter to Benois from November 1909, Makovskii implies that it was Benois’s suggestion, which was not immediately accepted by the editorial team as they had submitted a different title – *The Acropolis* (*Akropol’*). Such a title referred to the Greek Classical period, but lacked the “mystical” connotations present in the title *Apollo*.

The editorial explanation of the chosen title was articulated in a two-page “Introduction” (“Vstuplenie”) before it was followed by the already discussed editorial statement “In Expectation of the Hymn to Apollo”, which was prepared by Makovskii, Annenskii, Benois and Ivanov.¹⁴⁴ The editorial board announced that their vision of art was encoded directly in the title:

Apollo. In the title is our chosen path as such. Beware, this is hardly a new way to the art of Antiquity. Neo-Classicism, the imitation of Greek and Renaissance art, possible today only as a fleeting passion or as a protest against the shapeless daring of art that has forgotten the legacy of cultural

143 For example, the reading of a book during a long journey by train is mentioned in Lev Tolstoi’s story *The Kreuzer Sonata* (*Kreitzerova sonata*) first published in 1889. See L.N. Tolstoi, *Povesti i rasskazy 1885–1902*, vol. 12, (Moskva: Khudozhestvennaia literatura, 1982) 124.

144 Lavrov and Timenchik 225.

continuity (*zakony kul'turnoi preemstvennosti*). ... The wide path of "Apollonianism" that we are dreaming of, cannot coincide with the easy path, footworn by the teachers of past centuries, which leads to Parnassus and to the cold Academic idolatries. Apollo is only a symbol, a remote call from yet unbuilt temples (*dalekii zov iz eshche nepostroennykh khramov*) that heralds the new era of sincere and mighty aspiration and the search for the new truth begins in contemporary art: from uncoordinated experiments to appropriate mastery; from vague effects to style, to beautiful shape, and to vivifying dream.¹⁴⁵

The title appeared in both cover and title pages. The outer "packaging" of the first issues of the *World of Art* and *The Golden Fleece* consisted only of the cover pages, which were followed by undecorated title pages that usually presented only the title and the volume identifications. *Apollo's* first issue arrived, however, with a "double visual identity"; it had a cover *and* a title page, both designed by Bakst (Fig 4.3; Fig. 4.1).

At first glance it seems difficult to establish a visual and thematic connection between the cover and title pages. However, if we take a closer look, the two images represent a common narrative with clear references to Antiquity. The cover (Fig. 4.3), printed on creamy-ochre paper (the original colour was possibly lighter), depicts the image of a dragon, framed by a brownish-ochre border with curved ornamentation resembling the Marine style of middle Minoan ceramics, a motif that Bakst derived from his recent trip to Greece in

145 "Vstuplenie," *Apollon* 1 (1909): 3. This program was developed before the first organizing meeting of the future editorial board of the journal happened in May 1909. Drafts of the program are published by Lavrov and Timenchik, and it is important to quote here the main points of *Apollo's* agenda draft so metaphorically expressed by Benois in the programmatic article: "*Apollo's* goal is to sprout the new art criticism in the widest meaning of this term. ... We are absolutely sure that only a genuine search for Beauty, only serious attitude towards objectives of creativity will find access to the pages of *Apollo*. Beginnings of Apollonianism, i.e. principle of culture – 'entry to the future through remaking the past', according to our standpoint, has nothing in common with Academicism and recklessness. We live in the future, and we know that the past once will become the future, while our future will also become the past. There is no life without fight. *Apollo* has its urgent goals. We will fight pornography because it encroaches upon on the most valuable cultural acquisition – the taste to finesse". The final text developed by Makovskii, based on Annenskii's draft quoted above, was just a refined version of Annenskii's program (Lavrov and Timenchik 224–225). In the final redaction, the word "pornography" was replaced by the term "dishonesty".

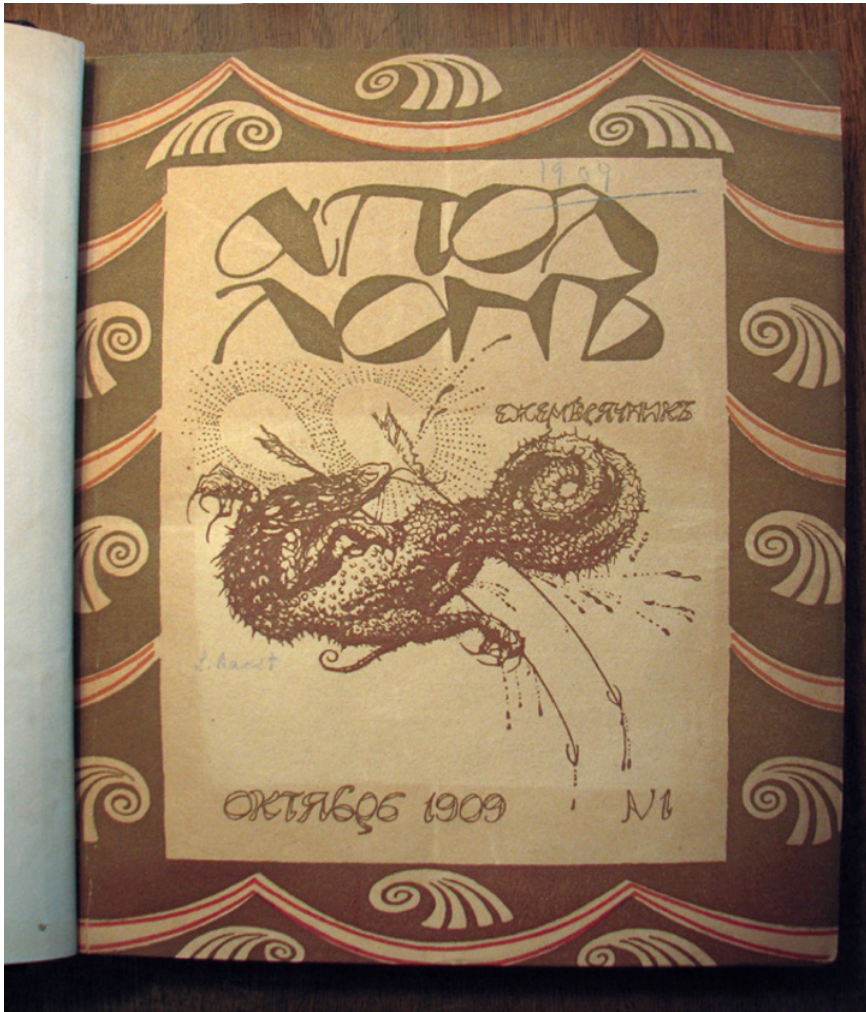


FIGURE 4.3 *Léon Bakst. Cover page for Apollo (Apollon), no. 1, 1909.*

COURTESY OF THE FRICK ART REFERENCE LIBRARY.

1907.¹⁴⁶ The Cyrillic lettering used for the title was stylized by Bakst to resemble the Greek alphabet, as well as alluding to Art Nouveau with “empty” letters. The image of the dragon in the centre of the cover, carefully rendered with modelling, seems to contrast with the vocabulary Bakst used for the flat border ornamentation. The central figure, a dying dragon, is pierced with two arrows with radiant feathers; blood spurts from his wounds.

¹⁴⁶ About Bakst's trip to Greece see below.

Such an image seems quite unusual for Bakst. Among the *World of Art* artists only Lanceray included monstrous imagery in his graphic designs. It was he who drew numerous dragons, serpents and other beasts for the *World of Art* and *The Golden Fleece's* vignettes (see for example, Fig. 3.13), but Léon Bakst had never previously displayed this kind of artistic attraction. However, here he revisited the imagery that had so often appeared in the *World of Art*, perhaps in order to establish a visual connection between the two art journals.

What, then, did this image of a dragon have to do with the title of *Apollo*? The dragon may have served as an extended reference to the myth of Apollo. According to Greek mythology, Apollo was the young god of sunlight and the god of archery – the arrows that pierce the dragon emit light. Apollo killed the earth-dragon Python that lived close to Delphi and which persecuted Apollo's mother Leto, and he later erected the temple of Delphi.¹⁴⁷ The image of the dragon,¹⁴⁸ indeed the very instant of its death, connects to the moment of Apollo's establishment as a major deity. Although the visual connection between cover and title pages was created only via the title inscriptions on both cover and title pages, the cover and title pages represented two different moments of the same story.

The two pages, however, do not represent an entirely unified iconological narrative. The image of the dragon, in and of itself, for example, may not be derived directly from ancient Greek art, rather, it may have been related to another narrative that was popular in Europe and Russia: the hagiography of St George. Bakst and the other *World of Art* artists were familiar with West European images of St George and the dragon, conveyed by Italian Renaissance artists and employed by nineteenth-century English and French artists.¹⁴⁹ He and his *World of Art* colleagues most likely knew that Ruskin was an enthusiast of St George's

147 Iohannes Irmsher and Renate Ione, eds. and comps., *Slovar' antichnosti*, trans. V.I. Gorbushin, et al., ed. V.I. Kuzishchin (Moskva: Progress, 1989) 41.

148 As a reminder of the major mythological serpents and dragons for the ancient Greeks, we could mention the narratives about Heracles, who killed two serpents and later dispatched the snake Hydra, and even more important for our narrative personage, Jason, who overcame the dragon who guarded the Golden Fleece.

149 For example, Moreau's *St George and the Dragon* (1889–90), Burne-Jones's series *St George and the Dragon* (1865–66), and the Pre-Raphaelites' Dante Gabriel Rossetti's *The Wedding of Saint George and Princess Sabra* (1857). It is worth mentioning that according to Rodger Drew, Rossetti interpreted "St George as a solar hero, dressed in red and gold, with sun-ray spurs, and solar motif pierced into his golden helm. Behind his head is a sun-disc nimbus, and his hair seems to curl up like flames along the hair-line". Rodger Drew, *The Stream's Secret. The Symbolism of Dante Gabriel Rossetti* (Cambridge: The Lutterworth Press, 2007) 245.

and had founded a guild of St George at Sheffield in 1871.¹⁵⁰ Among the World of Art artists Lanceray seems to have been the one most thoroughly immersed in Victorian medievalism: in one of his vignettes, originally created as a frontispiece for an article devoted to James Abbot McNeill Whistler,¹⁵¹ he depicts a crying princess encircled with the long tail of the dragon, waiting for St George to come to her rescue.¹⁵²

The Russian variant of St George's hagiography known as *The Miracle of George, the Serpent and the Maiden* (*Chudo Georgiia o Zmie i o devitse*) was widespread in the ancient Rus' manuscripts.¹⁵³ The canonical icons of *St George and the Serpent* were of two kinds: in the first, St George is depicted at the very moment of piercing the serpent; and in the later versions, the princess, who leads the pacified serpent with her sash, is added.¹⁵⁴

St George was not popular in turn-of-the-century Russian art (but was, however, in folklore); it seems that only Valentin Serov approached the depiction of St George with a typical European rendition of the dragon (not a serpent). Serov executed his painting *George the Victorious* (*Georgii Pobedonosets*) in 1885 and Bakst re-interpreted the image of the convulsing dragon from his friend's painting. Its composition, foreshortened and displaing the twists of

150 Samantha Riches, *St. George. Hero, Martyr and Myth* (Phoenix Mill: Sutton Publishing, 2000) 199.

151 Joris-Karl Huysmans, "Whistler," *Mir Iskusstva* 16–17 (1899).

152 In Russia the image of St George was well known after Christianization; this renown was also due to the popularity images of *bogatyr*s in the Russian folklore tradition, the killers of dragons, the personifications of evil. In the oldest epic stories, *byliny* (pl. sing. – *bylina*), there are several personages whose mythological narratives were close to St George – Dobrynia Nikitich, Alesha Popovich, and Il'ia Muromets, who struggled with an East Slavic folkloric beast called Zmei (a serpent). A.M. Astakhova, *Narodnye skazki o bogatyriakh russkogo eposa* (Moskva: Izdatel'stvo Akademii Nauk SSSR, 1962) 40. Namely these bogatyr's were depicted in the already discussed Vasnetsov's painting, reproduced in the first issue of the *World of Art* (fig. 2.11).

153 The cult of St George was well established in Kievan (Kyivan) Rus' (9–13 century) and later gained the status of one of the most popular cults in Muscovite Russia. Eventually St George would come to be acknowledged as Imperial Russia's great "official" saint: the representation of St George and the Serpent was a central element of the coat of arms of the Russian Empire. In 1767, Catherine the Great instituted the order of St George which was given for military distinctions. About the mythology of St George in general see David Scott Fox, *Saint George. The Saint with Three Faces* (Berks: Kensal P, 1983) 114. About the Russian interpretation of the myth of St George see O.V. Tvorogov and A.A. Turilov, "Zhitie Georgiia Pobedonosetsa," *Slovar' knizhnikov i knizhnosti Drevnei Rusi. XI-pervaia polovina XIV v.*, ed. D.S. Likhachev (Leningrad: Izdatel'stvo "Nauka", 1987) 144.

154 V.I. Antonova and N.E. Mneva, *Katalog drevnerusskoi zhivopisi. Opyt istoriko-khudozhestvennoi klassifikatsii*, vol. 1, (Moskva: Iskusstvo, 1963) 88–89.

the agitated body of the dying dragon became quite inspirational for Bakst who, many years after Serov's work was executed, designed the cover page of *Apollo* as showing the dragon Python killed by Apollo, while also referring visually to the dragon killed by St George.

The dragon appeared on the cover page of *Apollo* for only three months, and was replaced by a radically designed new cover by Dobuzhinskii (Fig. 4.4).

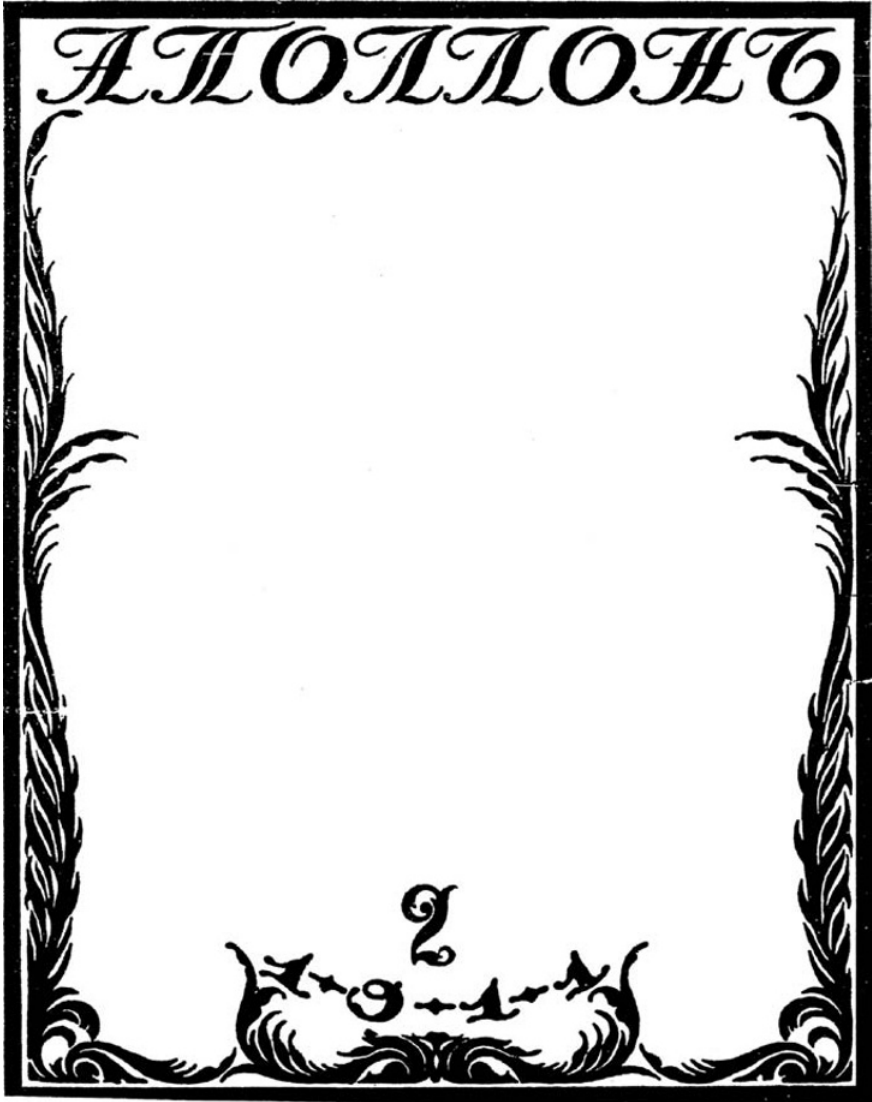


FIGURE 4.4 Mstislav Dobuzhinskii. Cover for *Apollo* (Apollon), no. 2, 1911.

COURTESY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS AT URBANA-CHAMPAIGN
LIBRARY.

Instead of telling the story of Apollo, Dobuzhinskii created an Empire Style-inspired ornamental frame with plant motifs of laurel leaves and calligraphic lettering of the title. The frame embraced an empty space and allowed experimentation with the colour of the cover; the flat black ornamental frame was superimposed on the background of solid green, red or blue. Its daring "nothingness" or "emptiness" in the centre echoed Korovin's "empty" cover (Fig. 2.1) and predicted the move to abstraction and future experiments with pure colours. As Makovskii recalled, Dobuzhinskii was quite reluctant to design the new cover and agreed only on the condition that Makovskii would give him permission to create a simple and elegant cover, "empty in the centre", where the Empire Style ornamental frame would "spread at the edges and stub".¹⁵⁵

The Title Page: Connecting Greek Archaism with Modernism

Bakst's title page was printed on the same paper as the entire run of the periodical, which was thinner than the heavier paper used for the cover. The paper may originally have been white, which over time has yellowed. Following Greek mythology, the original title page can be "read" as an imagined portico of the temple of Apollo (Fig. 4.1). The reader (and viewer), placed within the architecture, was invited to view the image, looking in between two massive two-dimensionally depicted unmodeled columns that taper toward the bottom, resembling those that had been recently excavated in the Knossos palace in Crete. In the midground, on the right, the statue of the young god Apollo, rendered with gentle modeling, referred to both archaic kouros figures and to the *Prince of Lilies* from the Minoan mural in Knossos. Apollo was shown standing on a pedestal and holding an ancient lyre or zither, while laughing satyrs are running away to the left. Below the statue, in the lower right corner, was a depiction of sacred horns – a common feature in Cretan-Minoan culture.

This image was an artistic interpretation of what Bakst had seen in 1907¹⁵⁶ during his trip to Greece with his friend Serov,¹⁵⁷ who shared Bakst's interest in Hellenism. Indeed Serov had guided Bakst's first steps in art and this expedition

¹⁵⁵ Makovskii, *Grafika Dobuzhinskogo* 42.

¹⁵⁶ Bakst, a devotee of Antiquity, dreamt for years of a journey to the country of ancient Hellas. In 1903, he described his aspirations to his fiancé Liubov' Gritsenko: "What is about Greece? I think about this trip with hope. I love the world of Antiquity. I expect to feel some kind of revelation there... Ah the Acropolis! I need it because I gave too much room to my imagination [in art work] and not enough to reality". Qtd. in I.N. Pruzhan, *Lev Samoilovich Bakst* (Leningrad: Iskusstvo, 1975) 64. The planned trip in 1903 was postponed due to Bakst's illness.

¹⁵⁷ In Serov's oeuvre, the trip resulted in executing his famous paintings *Odysseus and Nausicaa*, 1910 and *Abduction of Europa*, 1910.

appeared to be Bakst's return gift to Serov.¹⁵⁸ They visited Olympia, Patras, Athens, Crete, and Delphi. In 1923, Bakst would publish his travelogue based on this voyage, *Serov and I in Greece (Serov i ia v Gretsii)*¹⁵⁹ and it would become a commemoration of their friendship.

The pilgrimage to Greece was a noteworthy milestone in Bakst's life that significantly contributed to his graphic and theatre design career. Bakst had been inspired by ancient Greek art for several years before he executed the cover and title pages for *Apollo*. His interest in Greece began to develop in 1902 when he drew the stage designs for Euripides's *Hippolytus* and in 1904 for Sophocles's *Oedipus at Colonus* and *Antigone*. His graphic designs for the *World of Art* and *The Golden Fleece* had been filled with Ancient Greek motifs of colonnades, porticoes, and sculptural elements arranged in frontal, often symmetrical, composition. However, despite the fact that Bakst was inspired by Classical antiquity, this trip was not a homage to Classical Greece. To quote André Levinson,¹⁶⁰ who wrote about Bakst in 1923,

Bakst did not go to Greece in order to say his "prayer upon the Acropolis", to venerate the Attic serenity, the "sublime grace and the sweet grandeur" discovered by Winckelmann and Goethe. He visited hot Argos, and Mycenae with its tomb of the Atrides which several years before had inspired the poet d'Annunzio with the painting dialogue of his "Dead City"; Mycenae whose gates called forth in him something like homesickness for Egypt. He strolled about Crete, among the remnants of the palace of Minos, dreaming about Medea the Sorceress, about the Minotaur conquered by Theseus, about the monsters, the Titans, all those brutal or mystic figures – the gorgons, the Euryinies – who by their incessant assaults shook the pedestal where the Divine Archer defied them. The fantastic and passionate conception of the stage decorations for the Greek tragedies and ballets which were to earn such applause in Paris had its origin in these meditations of his in the occult presence of Hellas' clear sky.¹⁶¹

In his travelogue, Bakst wrote that he and Serov had wanted to explore "everything as close to Homer as possible".¹⁶² In Greece they made a number of sketches and drawings "looking for the modern manner of depicting Greek

158 André Levinson, *Bakst. The Story of the Artist's Life* (1923 New York: Benjamin Blom, 1971) 102.

159 Lev Bakst, *Serov i ia v Gretsii. Dorozhnye zapisi* (Berlin: Knigoizdatel'stvo "Slovo", 1923).

160 André Levinson (Andrei Levinson, 1887–1933) was Bakst's contemporary, a Russian art critic and theatre and dance journalist, who published his works in *Apollo*.

161 Levinson 107.

162 Bakst, *Serov i ia v Gretsii* 42.

mythology".¹⁶³ They worked for hours sketching the artifacts excavated by Arthur Evans (1851–1941)¹⁶⁴ and Frederico Halbherr that were exhibited in the museum in Candia (Heraklion) and in other museums.

Bakst would articulate his impression about Cretan art in one of his few articles, "The Paths of Classicism in Art" ("Puti klassitsizma v iskusstve"), published in *Apollo* no. 2–3, 1909:

We know how well that the Europeans have embraced Cretan culture, so newly discovered by Evans and Halbherr. Yesterday it was an almost unknown world, while today it is a new branch of the art of antiquity, very close and very nearly related to us! It is an independent offshoot of Egyptian and Chaldean arts that developed into an art full of unexpected courage, semi-deliberated decisions, easy and brilliant victories; it shimmers with life and style. Cretan art is as daring and dazzling as the madly audacious race of nude youths who splendidly seize the heated horses by their odorous manes... There is none of the graven, restrained perfection of Praxiteles or the absolute beauty of the Parthenon in this art, which is close to us. Cretan culture never achieved exceptional heights, which leads only to abstraction or tenderness (*iznezhennost'*). That is why it is closer to the newest art by its semi-perfection (*polusovershennost'*): it breathes with human effort and smiles. And indeed, the contemporary artist automatically rests his intent gaze on Cretan culture and appreciates the acmes of its excellence. The young acute eye of a Cretan artist, an eternally smiling child, looks out from behind unrestricted ornaments and boisterous frescoes. It is possible to graft from such art.¹⁶⁵

Having discovered the "*primitif classique*," Bakst believed in the possibility of a future interpretation of Cretan art by his contemporaries and drew parallels with modern art that, as will be discussed shortly, was moving toward a re-discovery of Archaism. The title-page image was Bakst's personal attempt to connect Greek Archaism with Modernism.

The Russian Cretan Quest and the Origins of Archaism

At the turn of the century, the Russian interest in Crete was stirred not just by Arthur Evans's discoveries but also by the complicated political situation in Crete. Crete experienced a civil crisis that involved all the major European states, the Russian Empire among them. In 1899, the periodical *Russian Thought*

¹⁶³ Bakst, *Serov i ia v Gretsii* 42.

¹⁶⁴ Bakst, *Serov i ia v Gretsii* 43.

¹⁶⁵ Lev Bakst, "Puti klassitsizma v iskusstve," *Apollon* 3 (1909): 51.

(*Russkaia mysl'*) published a survey of Cretan history written by the journalist Countess Ina Kapnist (1864–?).¹⁶⁶ This article articulated major historical facts about the island and reflected on what was known in Russia before the Knossos Palace was exposed. In her historical survey the author referred to the major Classical authorities, Homer, Herodotus, Thucydides, and the modern researchers of Antiquity such as Curtis and Pottier. Evans was also mentioned in regards to the newest suppositions about Cretan art and the Linear tablets of the Minoan era. It is quite likely that Kapnist knew well Evans's earlier publications in *The Journal of Hellenistic Studies* (1894), in *The Academy* (1896) and in *Annual of the British School in Athens* (1895–6). Bakst and Serov also knew about the excavations that were changing perceptions of the past.

Evans began archeological digs on the Kephala hill in March 1900,¹⁶⁷ but he had first visited the island of Crete in 1894 to track down sealstones. Evans knew about excavations conducted by Minos Kalokairinos, the merchant and art lover, at Knossos in 1878–9. No doubt, the importance of the “Mycenaean Palace”, as it was called at the time, was already an established fact by the end of the nineteenth century.¹⁶⁸ The further excavation seasons conducted by Evans were from 1901 to 1905 and after a break in 1906 the work resumed in 1907 and lasted until 1910.¹⁶⁹ Joseph MacGillivray reports that more than half of the Palace was revealed in 1901,¹⁷⁰ and during the last major session in 1905, the greatest part of the two-acre building of the Knossos Palace was exposed.¹⁷¹ That means that Bakst and Serov were probably the first Russian artists to “discover” the famous Cretan palace and offer the Russian viewer a “modern” reinterpretation of the “*primitif classique*” of Archaic Hellas to Russia.

In this context, Jacques Leenhardt's discussion of the role of archeology and Archaism's discovery for the subsequent development of artistic culture in Europe is key. He points out:

As a matter of fact, Western civilization had never ceased since the Renaissance, to dream of Greco-Latin antiquity, to dream of a world

166 Ina Kapnist, “Istoricheskii ocherk ostrova Krita,” *Russkaia mysl'* Vol 1–2 (1899): 16–39; 22–40. Ina Kapnist was a memoirist and journalist.

167 Gerald Gadogan, “The Pioneers: 1900–1914,” *Cretan Quests. British Explorers, Excavators and Historians*, ed. Davina Huxley (London: British School at Athens, 2000) 15.

168 Ann Brown, “Evans in Crete before 1900,” *Cretan Quests. British Explorers, Excavators and Historians*, ed. Davina Huxley (London: British School at Athens, 2000) 9–10.

169 Gadogan 21.

170 Joseph Alexander MacGillivray, *Minotaur. Sir Arthur Evans and the Archaeology of the Minoan Myth* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2000) 202.

171 MacGillivray 236.

supposedly coherent both at the social and esthetic level. At the moment when the industrial revolution definitively returned these reveries to their imaginary status, at the moment when the antiquarian musing of Winckelmann appears no longer to mobilize energies, so their ideal of equilibrium is very remote from unbalanced and unequal powers that grind down the old social structures and deliver, in the cruel and barbaric suffering of the nineteenth century, the new values and the new social systems. It is, as if by miracle of opportunity, another Greece that makes its appearance on the archeological scene.¹⁷²

Jacques Leenhardt says that Heinrich Schliemann invented Troy for the Europeans;¹⁷³ similarly, Bakst and Serov invented Greek Archaism for the Russians. They "enthroned archeology" for further interpretation as "a mythological demand of the time that only begins to be conscious of itself". At this point Crete suited quite well "the social impulse that little by little dethrones the Greece of Pericles from its pedestal"¹⁷⁴ not only in the western imagination, but also in that of Russia.

One of the main characteristics of turn-of-the-century culture (both Western European and Russian) was, in an epistemological sense, the crisis of knowledge that caused "the acute anxiety about the relation of the external world with the individual's internal perception of it".¹⁷⁵ Schliemann and Evans not only "invented" Troy and Knossos, but also fashioned as prophets¹⁷⁶ of the past. Late Imperial Russian "prophetic" writings about the past (and upcoming future) were not uncommon either. Many writers and philosophers of the early twentieth century (e.g. Dmitrii Merezhkovskii, Zinaida Gippius, Vasilii Rozanov, Ivanov, and others) presented themselves as oracles – God-Seekers (*Bogoiskateli*) and God-Builders (*Bogostroiteli*). Some of them positioned themselves as the retrospective prophets of neo-paganism and declared the supremacy of the Ancient worldview over Christianity.¹⁷⁷

172 Jacques Leenhardt, "Archaism: Confronting the Past," *Art Criticism* 4/3 (1988): 76–77.

173 Leenhardt 76–77.

174 Leenhardt 76–77.

175 Cathy Gere, *Knossos and the Prophets of Modernism* (Chicago – London: The University of Chicago Press, 2009) 6.

176 See the development of this idea in Gere 7.

177 Many "prophetic" ideas expressed by Merezhkovskii, Rozanov and others were published in the *World of Art*. See, for example, Dmitrii Merezhkovskii, "L. Tolstoi i Dostoevskii," *Sobranie sochinenii v 24 t.* by D.S. Merezhkovskii. vol. IX–XII, (Moskva: Izdatel'stvo I.D. Sytina, 1914). This aforementioned long essay was first published in the *World of Art*. Vasilii Rozanov, "O drevneegipetskoj krasote," *Mir iskusstva* 9–10; 11–12 (1899); Vasilii Rozanov, "Kontsy i nachala, 'Bozhestvennoe' i 'demonicheskoe', Bogi i demony," *Mir Iskusstva* 7–12

To a certain degree, in his article “The Paths of Classicism in Art,” Bakst also figured as a harbinger. He overturned the old opposition between the past and present and the linear development of art and created a new logic of artistic succession that now broke those previous rules. According to this logic, future artists would move toward a “*primitif classique*” visual language that could be borrowed from Cretan art.¹⁷⁸ Bakst was the first to introduce Greek Archaism in Russia, but not the first in Europe. In making the title page drawing, he may have been inspired by the famous poster of Vienna Secession reproduced in *Ver Sacrum* in 1898, created by Gustav Klimt, which depicted Theseus, the Minotaur and Athena standing in profile similarly to Bakst’s figure of Apollo (Fig. 4.5). Klimt’s poster also dealt with a Cretan theme and mythology, which in part reflected the Viennese Secession’s complex artistic program and that of their periodical.

The “Archeological” Meaning of the Title Page

In designing his title page for *Apollo*, Bakst approached its creation as an “archeologist”, looking primarily at “archeological” details. In his unpublished article about Bakst written in 1906, Belyi, who considered Bakst an artist of high talent, wrote that “his sketches from antique life represent almost a treatise. The verisimilitude and archeological authenticity (*arkheologichnost*) of the costumes and postures point to his serious creative work”.¹⁷⁹ In 1913, when Bakst’s theatrical designs were introduced in America, the reviewers called Bakst “a great archeologist, [who] uses, with entire freedom, the materials of past ages...”.¹⁸⁰ The so-called “archeological” meaning of the title page was indirectly inspired by the rising interest in archeology among artists in early-twentieth-century Russia.

This “archeological” interest appeared in the early nineteenth century, when the archeological excavations in the Black Sea region took place. In fact many artists and literati were fascinated by the discoveries of Greek antiquities and the archeological digs in the South of the Russian Empire and reflected on them in their works. For example, Aleksandr Pushkin’s set of poems “Ovid’s Cycle” (“*Ovidiev tsikl*”) was devoted to Publius Ovid Naso who

(1902): 122–141; Vasilii Rozanov, “Zvezdy,” *Mir Iskusstva* 8–9 (1901): 69–78; Vasilii Rozanov, “Iz ital’ianskikh vpechatlenii. Pompeiia,” *Mir Iskusstva* 5–6 (1902): 352–358 and others.

178 Bakst, “Puti klassitsizma v iskusstve” *Apollo* 2–3 (1909): 63–78; 46–61.

179 S.S. Grechishkin and A.B. Lavrov, “Neizdannaiia stat’ia Andreia Belogo ‘Bakst,’” *Pamiatniki kul’tury, novye otkrytiia. Pis’mennost’, iskusstvo, arkheologiiia* (1978): 97.

180 Qtd. in Susan Rather, *Archaism, Modernism and the Art of Paul ManSHIP* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1993) 128.

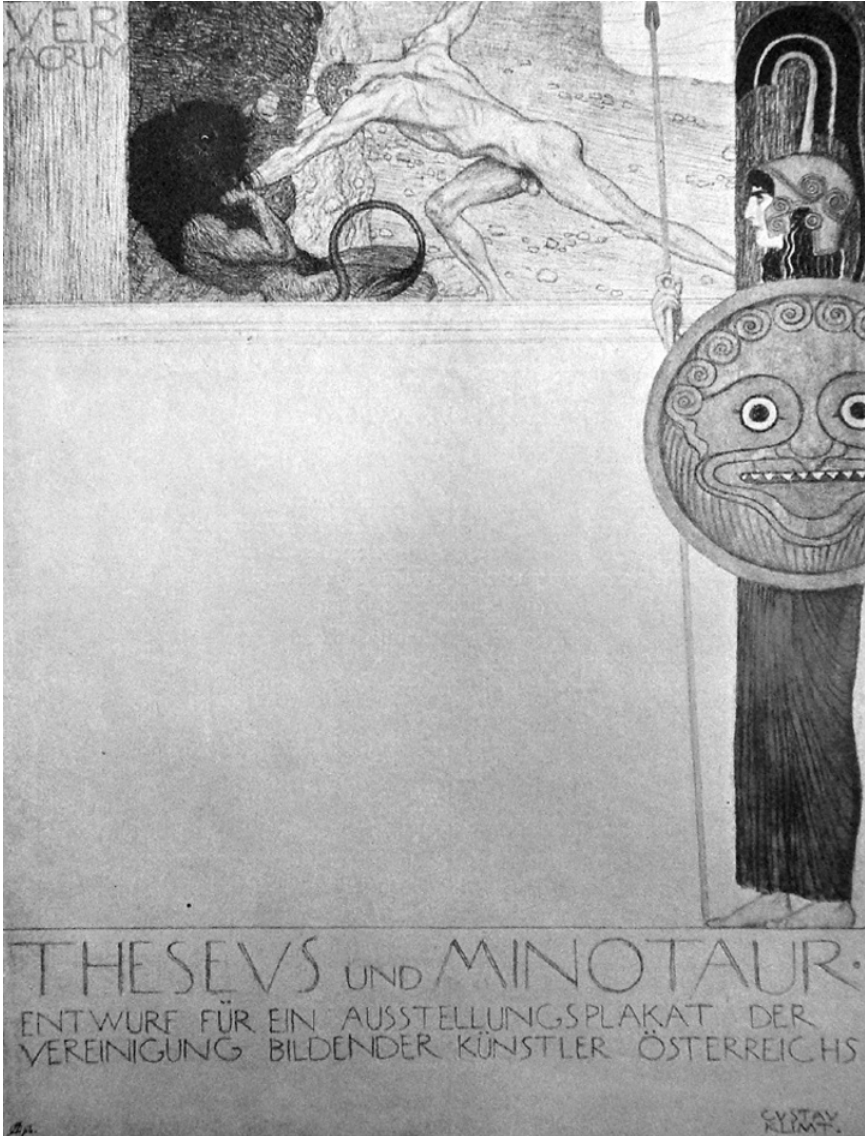


FIGURE 4.5 Gustav Klimt. Poster, reproduced in *Ver Sacrum*, 1898.

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in the 1st century AC was exiled by Emperor Augustus to the hinterlands of the Ancient world, to the city of Tomi on the Black Sea, where he lived for several years.¹⁸¹

181 A.A. Formozov, *Stranitsy istorii russkoi arkheologii* (Moskva: Nauka: 1986) 99.

The Black Sea region's excavations not only stimulated a general interest in archeology and Antiquity, but also reinforced the idea that Antiquity was closer to the Russians than it had seemed before. Finding the same kind of ancient Greek artifacts in the territory of the Russian Empire as in Greece diminished Antiquity's unattainably lofty status. In the first half of the nineteenth century, the popularity of Antiquity became so great that various pseudo-scholarly books and articles flooded the book market. These works boldly asserted that "the Russians were the forefathers of the Greeks and Romans", that Russian was older than Ancient Greek, and that the Trojans and Ancient Persians in reality were Slavs.¹⁸² Such statements were not unusual in Russian culture. For example, Pushkin's contemporary, the poet, dramatist and translator, active participant of the archaeological digs in the Northern Black Sea area and follower of Neo-Classicism, Vasilii Kapnist (1758–1823), proclaimed that the legendary Hyperboreans had Russian (Rus') origins, and that Odysseus, in fact, traveled not in the Mediterranean Sea, but in the Black and Azov's Seas.¹⁸³

Interest in archeology and Hellenistic sites grew even greater among the artists and literati of the turn of the century. For example, the already mentioned prominent Professor of Ancient Literature and History at St Petersburg University and archeologist Mikhail Rostovtsev, who after his emigration from Russia would be appointed Professor at Yale University and the director of the excavations in Dura-Europos, was well known among the Russian cultural elite. The foremost Symbolist writers – Merezhkovskii,¹⁸⁴ Blok, Ivanov, Mikhail Kuzmin, Belyi, Bal'mont, Gippius, artists and art critics Konstantin Somov, Bakst, Dobuzhinskii, Benois, Makovskii, Grabar' and others – were all frequent visitors to Rostovtsev's home.¹⁸⁵

It is important to note that the idea that the visual arts and archaeology should cross-fertilize each other had been expressed in 1898 by one of the

182 Formozov 151.

183 I.V. Tunkina, *Russkaia nauka o klassicheskikh drevnostiakh iuga Rossii XVIII – seredina XIX v.* (Sankt-Peterburg: Nauka, 2002) 76. See Vasilii Kapnist's articles: V.V. Kapnist, "Mnenie, chto Ullis stranstvoval ne v Sredizemnom, no v Chernom i Azovskom moriakh," *Syn Otechestva* 56/38 (1819): 193–213; V.V. Kapnist, "Kratkoe izyskanie o giperboreanakh: o korennom possiiskom stikhoslozhenii," *Chtenie v Besede liubitelei russkogo slova* 18 (1815); See also reprinting of those articles in V.V. Kapnist, *Sobranie sochinenii v zh tomakh* (Moskva – Leningrad: Izdatel'stvo Akademii nauk SSSR, 1960).

184 It is important to mention in this context that Dmitrii Merezhkovskii's brother Konstantin Merezhkovskii was an archaeologist, who studied the primitive Palaeolithic states (Formozov 62).

185 V. Iu Zuev, "M.I. Rostovtsev. Gody v Rossii. Biograficheskaia khronika," *Skifskii roman*, ed. G.M. Bongard-Levin (Moskva: ROSSPEN, 1997) 65.

leading Russian artists and art critics of the early twentieth century, Nikolai Rerikh, a member of the editorial board of *Apollo*, who contributed to the periodical.¹⁸⁶ In *Art and Art Industry* (3–4, 1898) he published the article "Art and Archeology" ("Iskusstvo i arkheologiia"), in which he drew close links between archeology and art. He insisted that the artist of the historical genre, as well as the craftsman, had to be well acquainted with art of the past. To portray the lives of the ancients, the artist must be attentive to historical details, so much so that he becomes "an archeologist" (*uchenyi-arkheolog*).¹⁸⁷ Bakst, in point of fact, fulfilled this "archeological" mission.

It is likely that the imaginary archaic Sanctuary of Apollo, before it had been subject to the ruinous powers of time, is the ruin depicted on the periodical's title page. According to his travelogue, Bakst saw the Sanctuary ruins looking down from the hill. The ruins made a tremendous impression on the artist: "The gigantic fathomless abyss at night was almost near my feet... Somewhere deep beneath in the valley, under the dazzling violet-blue lightning, the white marble temples lie like the fairytale houses broken up by the hands of Cyclopes... They might have been fighting in anger when they hurled them down from the steep dark malevolent rocks".¹⁸⁸ This vision from above would be rendered in Bakst's most famous "archeological" painting *Terror Antiquus* (1908),¹⁸⁹ which was executed after his return.¹⁹⁰ It was first exhibited in the *Salon d'Automne* in Paris in 1908,¹⁹¹ later in Makovskii's Salon in St Petersburg in 1909 and in London in Bakst's personal exhibit in 1912, and was also reproduced in the first issue of *Apollo* (Fig. 4.6).

186 At the turn of the century Nikolai Rerikh, a graduate of the Academy of Arts, was associated with the Society for Encouragement of the Arts, which opposed itself to the World of Art group. His artworks were inspired by the ancient Slavic past and signified the Russian revivalist mode. Rerikh contributed to the Russian Seasons and in 1910 was elected the head of the World of Art, which at this point became a union of artists. In *The Golden Fleece* no 4, 1907, Makovskii published an article devoted to Rerikh's art. See republication of the text in Sergei Makovskii, "Poeziia rannikh zamyslov," *Derzhava Rerikha*, comp. D.N. Popov (Moskva: Izobrazitel'noe iskusstvo, 1994) 39–43.

187 Nikolai Rerikh, "Iskusstvo i arkheologiia," *Iskusstvo i khudozhestvennaia promyshlennost'* 3–4 (1898): 192–3.

188 Bakst, *Serov i ia v Gretsii* 56.

189 The vision of the antique catastrophe chased Bakst since 1904, namely in this year he made a sketch of the painting, which was accomplished after the trip to Greece. This sketch was exhibited in 1905 at the Exhibit of the Russian Artists in St Petersburg (see the list of Bakst's works in Pruzhan 214; see also 114).

190 *Terror Antiquus* was awarded the First Golden Medal in the 1911 Universal Exhibition in Brussels (Levinson 103).

191 Pruzhan 114.



FIGURE 4.6 Art reproduction of Léon Bakst's *Terror Antiquus* (Drevnii uzhas) in *Apollo* (Apollon), no. 1, 1809. Mezzotint.

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The colour reproduction of *Terror Antiquus* was the first art reproduction of *Apollo*. All of Bakst's impressions from his journey were represented on large-scale canvas suitable for Academic historical painting (250 × 270 cm).¹⁹² The ruins of the Sanctuary of Apollo, the Acropolis, the Lion Gates in Mycenae, and Knossos – elements of each were depicted as seen from above at the very moment of catastrophe. This image was immediately interpreted as the destruction of Atlantis. The first interpretation of the painting as the end of Atlantis was articulated by Ivanov in his article "Ancient Horror.' Apropos of L. Bakst's Painting "Terror Antiquus" ("Drevnii uzhas'. Po povodu kartiny L. Baksta "Terror Antiquus"), published in his collection of essays *In the Stars*

192 Usually the World of Art artists were inclined to execute paintings on a smaller scale.

(*Po zvezdam*) in 1909.¹⁹³ Maksimilian Voloshin, in his article "Archaism in Russian Painting: Rerikh, Bogaevskii and Bakst" ("Arkhaizm v russkoi zhivopisi. Rerikh, Bogaevskii i Bakst"),¹⁹⁴ published in the same issue, suggested that Crete might have been one of Atlantis's colonies and that that supposition became an inspiration for Bakst. Charles Spencer quotes the introduction in the 1912 Fine Art Society Catalogue,¹⁹⁵ in which Huntley Carter stated that the artist's aim was to realize "a vast landscape groaning beneath the terror of a cataclysm of nature", and, rising from this scene of desolation and disaster, "the calm triumphant image of Aphrodite-Isis".¹⁹⁶

The first interpretation of the statue as Aphrodite came from Ivanov. He explained it as a clash between the "female" and "male", alluding to the "female" religions and matriarchal societies with male sacrifice conducted by female priests. He asserted that Aphrodite's beauty did not have a human face. She was imperturbable as the Sphinx and stronger than all male gods. Moreover, Ivanov's further interpretation exposed that the goddess's statue was rather an image of Fate the Annihilator, *Sud'ba-Gubitel'nitsa* (in Russian the word "fate" [*sud'ba*] is of feminine gender). Namely fate, "terror fati" was the real subject of the painting.¹⁹⁷

Aphrodite's rendition was based on the images of archaic kores that Bakst had seen and sketched in the museums in Greece. His smiling sculptural goddess is holding a blue dove – a symbol of Aphrodite – in her hand. Tragic devastation is taking place right behind her back, but nothing can disturb her calm eternal archaic smile (the same image of a kore with the similar "archaic smile" can also be recognized in Serov's *Abduction of Europa* (*Pokhishchenie Evropy*), 1910, painted after his trip to Greece). In his article in *Apollo*, Voloshin would suggest that the depicted catastrophe appalled the viewer not by its horror, but with its sense of "safety" (*bezopasnost'*) and feeling of being removed from what the viewer is looking at, as though viewing the catastrophe through the thick-mirrored glass of an underground aquarium. Voloshin even claimed that "everything that Bakst painted was as if separated from the beholder with

193 See also Viacheslav Ivanov, "Drevnii uzhas'. Po povodu kartiny L. Baksta 'Terror Antiquus'," *Sobranie sochinenii v 4 tomakh* by Viacheslav Ivanov, vol. 3, (Brussels: Foyer Oriental Chrétien, 1979) 91–110.

194 Maksimilian Voloshin, "Arkhaizm v russkoi zhivopisi. Rerikh, Bogaevskii i Bakst," *Apollon* 1 (1909): 47–48.

195 See *Catalogue of an Exhibition of Drawings by Léon Bakst*, with a prefatory note by Huntley Carter (London: Fine Art Society, 1912).

196 Qtd. in Charles Spencer, *Léon Bakst* (London: Academy Editions, 1973) 37–8.

197 Ivanov, "Drevnii uzhas'" 91–110.

the glass window of the museum – for him the archaic was just a spacious hall in the museum of rarities”.¹⁹⁸ Bakst’s Aphrodite, an archaic goddess, is a mediator between this cataclysmic scene and the viewer, who is assumed to be an omniscient spectator of what is happening before his or her eyes. The Russian viewers, however, would be prepared to contemplate the disaster (recall Belyi’s eschatological drama “Trap of Night” published in *The Golden Fleece*) because it was created in the context of the “apocalyptic misgivings” of the God-Seekers and the contemporary “apocalyptically-predisposed” literature of Solov’ev, Merezhkovskii, Gippius, Leonid Andreev (1871–1919), Belyi, Blok and others.¹⁹⁹

Explaining Bakst’s title page, Voloshin was very precise and descriptive. He provided all the details the viewer would see and helped the reader to interpret the “*primitif classique*” Apollo from the title page:

Everywhere, as in all things that came from the Cretan era, the same ornamental line that evokes Atlantis is a part of the décor. It is the curve of a sea wave that can be found in myriad versions on numerous Cretan vases. It is the same ornament that Bakst embellished on the drawing of the cover page of *Apollo* and it resembles the indigenous ornaments of the Cretan vases. Archaic Apollo (from the frontispiece),²⁰⁰ who holds a cithar made of bullhorns is dressed in the same strange form of sash that is seen in all images of the Cretan tsars. Additionally, the columns depicted, which also can be found in the halls of the Knossos Palace, are narrowed toward the bottom, allowing us to see the fleeing satyrs between them.²⁰¹

In the context of this discussion, Voloshin’s article in the inaugural issue is centrally important as he also establishes the significance of archeology and its discoveries in the late nineteenth century. He connects “archaism” in painting with the heyday of archeological excavations and mentions the discovery of Troy and Mycenaean civilization. The twentieth century begins with Evans’s

198 Voloshin, “Arkhaizm v russkoi zhivopisi” 49.

199 See, for example, Andrei Belyi’s essay “Apocalypse in Russian Poetry” (“Apokalipsis v russkoi poezii”) published in *The Scales* in no. 4, 1905, pp. 11–28. See its republication: Andrei Belyi, “Apokalipsis v russkoi poezii,” *Simvolizm kak miroponimanie* by Andrei Belyi (Moskva: Respublika, 1994) 408–417.

200 Here Voloshin means the title page.

201 Voloshin, “Arkhaizm v russkoi zhivopisi” 47.

excavations in Crete, which, according to Voloshin, revealed the "purple sunset of Atlantis".²⁰²

The very fact that Voloshin responded to Bakst's title page with a detailed analysis was an important innovation – neither the *World of Art* nor *The Golden Fleece* published articles discussing the choices of imagery placed on the "face" of the journal (or any other images related to the graphic design). This kind of interpretation of the graphic design and the detailed explanation of what the reader (and the viewer) was supposed to recognize on the title page signified a new explicit level of integration between the word and image in Russian graphic design. Moreover, the image that Bakst created for the title page was now treated as an artwork, not merely as a decoration for the periodical. It signified that at this point graphic design in Russia was gaining a status comparable to painting and sculpture in the hierarchy of the arts.

Both Bakst's "archeological" archaic kora from the reproduction of the *Terror Antiquus* and *Apollo's* kouros of the title page, its column-like profile and rugged legs and feet, which were far from being anatomically convincing, represented the "*primitif classique*" and the "coarse style" (*lapidarnyi stil'*) that Bakst would describe in his already mentioned article that would appear in the 2nd and 3rd issues of *Apollo* titled "The Paths of Classicism in Art" (1909):

The new taste in art leads to a primitive form, to a path that lies at the beginning of all big art schools – to the coarse lapidary (*lapidarnyi*) style. Future artists or, rather, the future generation of artists, will inherit an

202 Voloshin, "Arkhaizm v russkoi zhivopisi" 44. Even though Voloshin's article reflected the ideology of *Apollo* and explained the visual message on the title page, Makovskii nevertheless considered that, in contrast to the others involved with the periodical, this author remained quite alien due to his "cast of mind, self-consciousness, and the universality of his artistic and speculative predilections" (Makovskii, *Portrety sovremennikov* 333). Voloshin was a person of broad outlook and was a true champion of *Gesamtkunstwerk*. He lived in the Crimea almost permanently, with access to the ruins and archeological excavations, and was one of the most knowledgeable persons about local folklore. See S. Narovchatov, "Predislovie," *Liki tvorchestva* by Maksimilian Voloshin, eds. V.A. Manuilov, V.P. Kupchenko and A.V. Lavrov (Leningrad: "Nauka", 1988) 7. Voloshin was also a consistent adherent of French culture: he had lived in France for several years and later interpreted and propagated French culture in more than a half of his critical works published in *The Scales* and the newspaper *Rus'*. See V.P. Kupchenko, V.A. Manuilov and N.Ia. Rykova, "M.A. Voloshin – literaturnyi kritik i ego kniga 'Liki tvorchestva,'" *Liki tvorchestva* by Maksimilian Voloshin, eds. V.A. Manuilova, V.P. Kupchenko and A.V. Lavrov (Leningrad: "Nauka", 1988) 557; see also Barbara Walker, *Maximilian Voloshin and the Russian Literary Circle. Culture and Survival in Revolutionary Times* (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2005).

illness caused by the overstraining of aestheticism. After refined exquisite cuisine, the body feels a call for rough country food. There it sees newer delights. ... In the combination of a few lines, future artists will see more genuinely modern art than in the refined repetitions and effete (*iznezhennye*) canons of the old schools.²⁰³

Later, in 1922, Makovskii, who described Bakst as the “most refined (*izyskanneishii*)²⁰⁴ artist of the *World of Art*”,²⁰⁵ would call Bakst’s essay a “truly unprejudiced prophecy” (*prorochestvo poistine nepristrastnoe*). However, at the moment of publication it seems that Bakst’s “prediction” did not resonate as strongly with the artistic elite as did his painting. Makovskii would later write in his memoirs that *Terror Antiquus* was executed before *Apollo* was conceived and was exhibited in Makovskii’s “Salon” in 1909. He reported that this work had triggered an enthusiastic response for Archaic Hellas among Petersburg’s leading cultural elite (*peredovoi Peterburg*); the “archeological” message was well received and the “apocalyptic” prophetic vision corresponded to the current philosophical search. Makovskii chose Bakst to design the cover and title pages of *Apollo* because *Terror Antiquus* was artistically persuasive and due to his “archeological discoveries” and his potential to visually express Apollonianism in new, modern, terms.²⁰⁶

Art Reproductions

Art reproductions were important constituents of *Apollo*. The technologies used to make art reproductions were mezzotint²⁰⁷ engravings, colour lithographs and autotypes of high quality. In contrast to its predecessors, however, *Apollo* did not use silk paper to protect the images: the reproduction process became more affordable and protection became less important. During its first years of publication, *Apollo* printed few reproductions; however, in 1911–1912

203 Bakst, “Puti klassitsizma v iskusstve” 61.

204 In his unpublished article about Bakst and his art, Belyi reflected on Bakst’s refinement: “His ornateness (*rychurnost*) requires serious thoughtfulness. His art is not striking, he does not dazzle with colour or plots of his works. And if we would treat everything he gave us thoughtfully, we would love his talent better than somebody else’s ‘blinding’ and ‘burning’ products of fantasy”. (Qtd. in Grechishkin and Lavrov 97).

205 Sergei Makovskii, *Siluety russkikh khudozhnikov* (Praga: Nasha rech’, 1922) 140.

206 Makovskii, *Na Parmase Serebrianogo veka* 197.

207 Mezzotint is an intaglio process of engraving on copper or steel by first applying a roughened surface with a rocker, a steel chisel whose edge is set with minute teeth and curved so the teeth are rocked into the plate at various angles to produce the desired light and shade effect. Also a print made by this process is called mezzotint (Allen 182).

the number of reproductions in each issue doubled. For example, the inaugural issue featured 20 art reproductions, and no. 9, 1911, reproduced 41 art works.

It seems that *Apollo*, the last major art journal in Imperial Russia, developed the "classical" conception for the later Soviet art press. Unlike its predecessors, the *World of Art* and *The Golden Fleece*, the editorial board of *Apollo* intended to provide an easy and straightforward means of communication with the reader. It usually placed the in-text reproductions where they corresponded to the text. Thus, Voloshin's article was supported by three of Bogaevskii's landscape drawings that were set into the layout of the text and commented on the author's discussion of Bogaevskii's art (Fig. 4.7). This approach helped the reader to concentrate on both the text and the images and understand the reproduction in a textual context. Bakst's *Terror Antiquus*, however, interrupted Annenskii's text²⁰⁸ (Fig. 4.6) instead of being placed in Voloshin's article, which referred to this image.

The illustrations which related to the Chronicle section were placed separate from the texts, too. The images were printed on enamel-paper that was thicker than the paper used for printing text. Thus, some art reproductions appeared removed from the texts they were intended to illustrate (see for example, Fig. 4.8). This may have happened due to the binding process: the bulk of the thick paper had to be distributed evenly in the book to prevent damage to the binding. The reproductions that supported the Chronicle section comprised several insets and reproduced works of Oskar Zwintscher (Fig. 4.8), Ferdinand Hodler, Gaston de Latouche, Walter Leistikow, and Edouard Vuillard – participants of the European exhibits of 1909, discussed in Georgii Lukomskii's (1884–1952) article "European Exhibits this Summer. The Travel Notes" ("Evropeiskie vystavki letom. Putevye zametki").²⁰⁹ Written by the artist and art historian Lukomskii, who specialized in architecture, the article represented a brief review of numerous European exhibits at a glance by one of the major participants of the journal. Photographs of contemporary classical-revivalist buildings designed by Lidval, however, were inserted into the article devoted to contemporary architecture "New Construction in St Petersburg" ("Novoe stroitel'stvo v S.-Peterburge"), which was written by Lukomskii under the pseudonym Iurii Rokh also published in the Chronicle (Fig. 4.9).²¹⁰

Roughly half of the reproduced works were Russian while the others were European – *Apollo* engaged in an international discourse. In future issues,

208 Innokentii Annenskii, "O sovremenntom lirizme," *Apollon* 1 (1909): 12–42.

209 Georgii Lukomskii, "Evropeiskie vystavki letom. Putevye zametki," *Apollon* 1 (1909): 7–11.

210 Iurii Rokh, "Novoe stroitel'stvo v S.-Peterburge," *Apollon* 1 (1909): 16–17.

Такъ на пути къ архаическому Рерихъ, Богаевскій и Бакстъ раздѣлили между собой камень, растение и человѣка. Изъ всѣхъ трехъ самый мощный, слѣпой, смѣлый, самый глухо-вѣщій—Рерихъ, рожденный отъ камня. Богаевскій, познавшій душу дерева,—самый стройный, самый музыкальный, самый проникновенный. А самый разнообразный, богатый, изящный и поверхностный — Бакстъ, который никогда и нигдѣ не можетъ забыть человѣка. Такъ камень становится растеніемъ, растение — звѣремъ, звѣрь — человѣкомъ, человѣкъ — демономъ...



РИС. К. БОГАЕВСКАГО

[53]

FIGURE 4.7 Page with reproduction of Konstantin' Bogaevskii's drawing in text of Maksimilian Voloshin's article "Archaism in Russian painting. Rerikh, Bogaevskii, and Bakst" (*"Arkhaizm v russkoi zhivopisi. Rerikh, Bogaevskii i Bakst."*). *Apollo* (Apollon), no. 1, 1909. Mezzotint.

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Apollo would publish Russian translations devoted to European art and literature, thus highlighting the idea that Russia was a part of Europe. While the *World of Art* aggressively expressed its daring international objectives – which prompted severe criticism by its opponents – *Apollo* was a trendsetter without



FIGURE 4.8 Page with art reproduction of Oskar Zwintscher’s works, on the left, and Mstislav Dobuzhinskii’s title for the *Chronicle*. *Apollo* (Apollon), no. 1, 1909.
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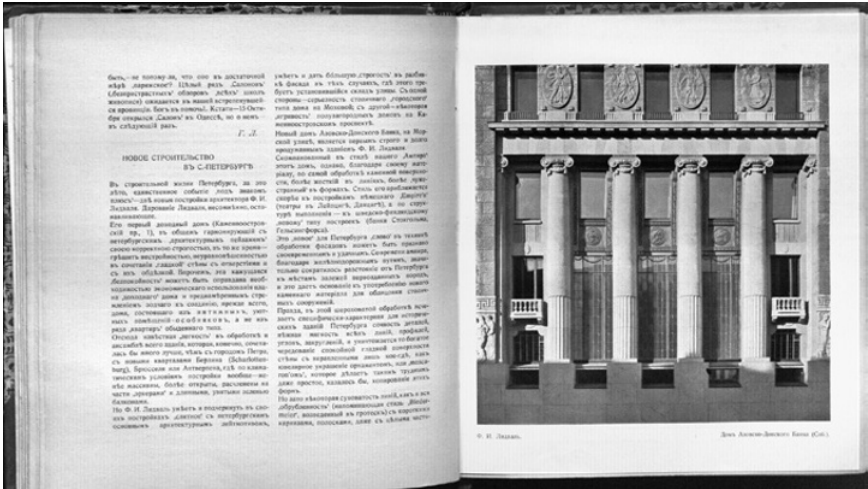


FIGURE 4.9 Page with photo-reproduction of the façade of the Azov-Don Bank designed by Fedor Lidval (on the right) and Iurii Rokh’s article “New Construction in St Petersburg” (“Novoe stroitel’stvo v S.-Peterburge”) (on the left). *Apollo* (Apollon), no. 1, 1909.
COURTESY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS AT URBANA-CHAMPAIGN LIBRARY.

serious detractors that might influence the public and reduce its subscriptions. Despite its stable status in art circles, *Apollo* remained a publishing enterprise addressed to the elite reader and viewer, therefore the number of subscribers stayed small.

Apollo's Graphic Design and its "Architectural" Meaning

In contrast to *The Golden Fleece* with its polyphony of different design modes, the inaugural issue of *Apollo* was represented by only two major designers: (1) Bakst, who was commissioned to draw the cover and title pages, which have been discussed, and (2) Dobuzhinskii, who designed dropped capitals and illustrations. Both artists came out of the *World of Art* and continued its general graphic stylistics. Dobuzhinskii, who joined the *World of Art* only in 1902, mentioned in his memoirs that his graphic design was extensively influenced by Benois and he even "imitated Benois's 'baroque' style".²¹¹ The only designer who represented the new generation was Dmitrii Mitrokhin (1883–1973). He, however, designed only one vignette for the issue, the end piece for Benois's "In the Expectation of the Hymn to Apollo", which represented an image of Apollo in an oval frame rendered with expressionism.

Dobuzhinskii was the chief-designer of the periodical and was one of Makovskii's favorite graphic artists. To him alone, and his graphic art, Makovskii devoted an entire book, *M.V. Dobuzhinskii's Graphic Art (Grafika M.V. Dobuzhinskogo)*,²¹² published in 1925; the other artists (for example, Benois)

211 Mstislav Dobuzhinskii, *Vospominaniia* (New York: Put' Zhizni, St Seraphim Foundation Inc., 1976) 301–303. By the time he joined the *World of Art*, he had already acquired substantial experience as an artist: in 1896 he attended the Petersburg drawing school at the Society for Encouragement of the Arts and from 1897 attended the private art school of N.D. Dmitriev-Orenburgskii and later the school of L.E. Dmitriev-Kavkazskii; in 1897 he took a course in antique art delivered by Adrian Prakhov, an art historian (a specialist in history of ancient architecture) and archaeologist, the Professor at St Petersburg University, the Imperial Academy of Arts in St Petersburg (1875–1887) and Kiev University, Doctor of Philosophy in art history for the dissertation "Architecture of Ancient Egypt" (1879). In the same year he published his graphic designs in the periodicals *Dragonfly (Strekoza)* and *Jester (Shut)*. In 1899, Dobuzhinskii entered the art school headed by the Slovenian Anton Ažbe (1862–1905) in Munich and next year transferred to the private school of the Hungarian Simon Hollósy (1857–1918), also in Munich. In 1901, he took an etching course in the graphic shop of Vasilii Mate. By 1909, Dobuzhinskii participated in a number of exhibits and began designing for the *World of Art*, *The Golden Fleece*, *The Hell Post (Adskaiia pochta)* and *Bogaboo (Zhupel)*. See M.V. Dobuzhinskii, *Pis'ma*, ed. G.I. Chugunov (Sankt-Peterburg: Izdatel'stvo "Dmitrii Bulanin", 2001).

212 Makovskii *Grafika M.V. Dobuzhinskogo*.

of the *World of Art* were discussed only in sections of his memoirs or in the chapters of his second volume of *Pages of Art Criticism*.²¹³ No other artist who participated in the design of *Apollo* garnered such special attention from Makovskii. Bakst went largely unnoted in Makovskii's memoirs and was mentioned briefly in his *Silhouettes of Russian Artists* (*Siluety russkikh khudozhnikov*, 1922) in the context of the emergence of Primitivism²¹⁴ and was briefly discussed in his second book *The Pages of Art Criticism* published in 1909.²¹⁵

In *Apollo*, Dobuzhinskii created the journal's inner look, which was opposed to the "Archaism" and "archeologism" of Bakst's cover and title pages, and represented Dobuzhinskii's "architectural" vision in graphic forms. "Architectural" motifs were present in many of Dobuzhinskii's designs. Thus, he designed the Empire Style dropped capitals (Fig. 4.10; Fig. 4.11) that opened every article of the journal. Each capital was framed by an ornamental border and was decorated with an architecturally inspired Empire Style vase. These vases resembled architectural modelings or typical garden decorative vases that could be seen in St Petersburg or in Peterhof architectural landscapes and gardens and referred to Apollonianism of the journal's vision. These letters continued to decorate the periodical until the last issue. Neither the *World of Art* nor *The Golden Fleece* exercised consistency, prioritizing changes and experimentation instead.

The source for Dobuzhinskii's "architectural" inspiration came from St Petersburg "graphic" cityscapes and architectural lines. In 1899–1900 Dobuzhinskii had lived in Munich, where he had studied painting. After his return to St Petersburg he was suddenly struck afresh by the grandeur and "graphic" rationality of St Petersburg and its architectural clarity:

It was as if I had forgotten it [St Petersburg] and now started to notice all the features that signify its difference from all other cities. I was able to compare – I saw so much in Europe... Indeed, I admired its beauty and I was delighted to see now afresh the Neva and the well-proportioned architectural ensembles, grandeur and poetics of the Empire Style. ... I looked intently at the graphic lines of Petersburg, scrutinized the non-plastered brick walls and their ornament that is created by the rough

213 Makovskii speaks there about Bilibin in a separate article, while, Benois, Somov and Bakst are discussed in "Retrospective Dreamers" (See the articles "Bilibin" and "Retrospektivnye mechtateli" in Makovskii, *Stranitsy khudozhestvennoi kritiki. Kniga vtoraiia*).

214 Makovskii, *Siluety russkikh khudozhnikov* 140–141.

215 Makovskii, *Stranitsy khudozhestvennoi kritiki. Kniga vtoraiia*.

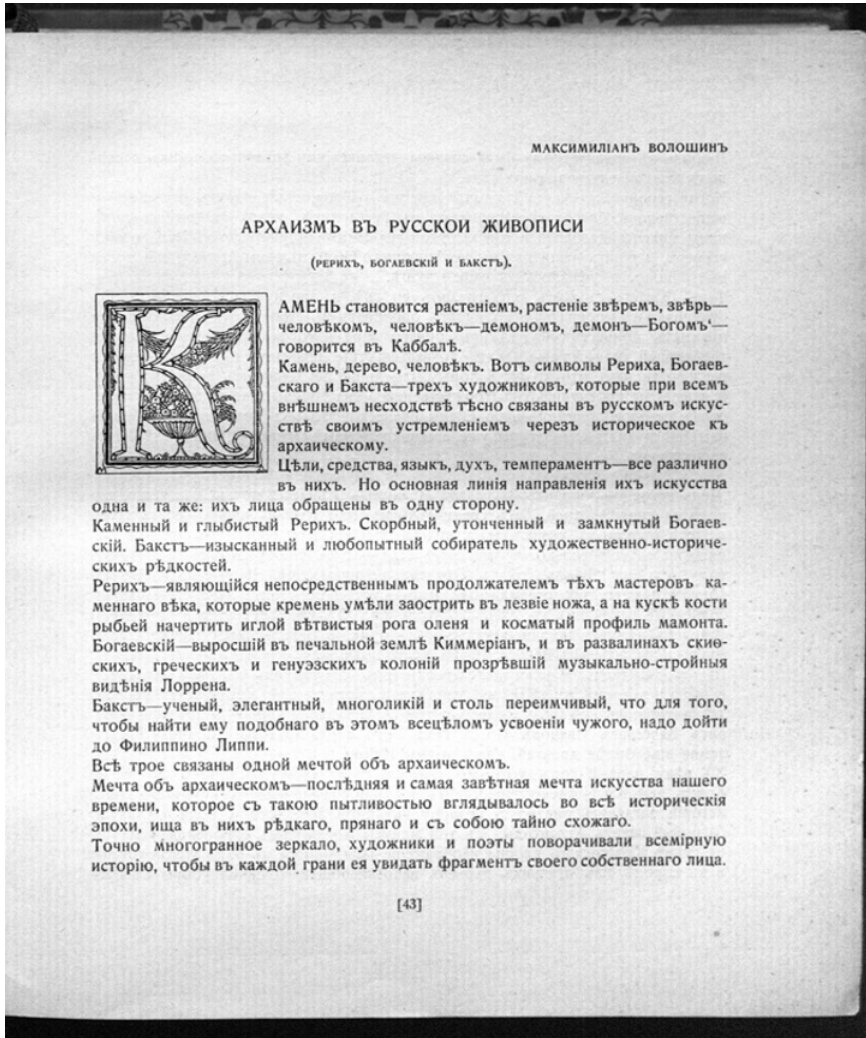


FIGURE 4.10 Page with Mstislav Dobuzhinskiĭ's dropped capital. Apollo (Apollon), no. 1, 1909. COURTESY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS AT URBANA-CHAMPAIGN LIBRARY.

blotches. Soon I was able to draw from memory the heavy railings of Ekaterininskii channel and tracery bannisters of Fontanka, the quasi-gothic laces of the railings on the Moika River and the ornaments of all other cast iron grilles at the quays. Namely these grills, antique masks on the windows and gates key-stones of the Empire Style buildings..., the elaborate yellow consoles and supporting sheds of porches, it seemed,



FIGURE 4.11 Page with Mstislav Dobuzhinskii's *dropped capital*. Apollo (Apollon), no. 1, 1909.
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LIBRARY.

most of all concealed the poetics of Petersburg's olden times... I did not just passively absorb all the new impressions of Petersburg; an irresistible desire was born to express everything that excited me now.²¹⁶

Dobuzhinskii was the most "architecturally" inspired artist in the World of Art group. Many artists of the movement – Benois, Anna Ostroumova-Lebedeva, Lanceray – adopted architectural motifs in their artwork, but in Dobuzhinskii's oeuvre, architecture and cityscapes played the primary role: St Petersburg, Moscow, Vilno (now Vilnius), Vitebsk (Vitsebsk), Rostov-on-Don, Voronezh, Paris, Amsterdam, the Hague, Haarlem, London, Sorrento, Lugano, Milan, Verona, Venice, Padua, Sienna and others – "the City with a capital C"²¹⁷ – was the main theme of his artwork.

²¹⁶ Dobuzhinskii, *Vospominaniia* 265–66.

²¹⁷ Erikh Gollerbakh, *Risunki M. Dobuzhinskogo* (Moskva, Petrograd: Gosudarstvennoe izdatel'stvo, 1923) 34.

According to Erikh Gollerbakh (1895–1942), a Russian art critic and author of monographs about major Russian artists of the early twentieth century,²¹⁸ Russian graphic art of the turn of the century began in St Petersburg as an infatuation with its architecture: “Russian graphic artists did not create St Petersburg; instead, St Petersburg created Russian graphic artists”.²¹⁹ Gollerbakh invented the definition “Petersburgian style” that refers to the Russian graphic art of the World of Art artists. This term is meant to identify the “graphical clarity” expressed in St Petersburg’s dominant architectural styles of Neo-Classicism and Empire Style, and to signify the city’s “graphic soul”, which is coloured by grey days and white nights,²²⁰ the black silhouettes of the monuments and the austere ornaments of the grilles.²²¹

By 1909, when *Apollo* was launched, Dobuzhinskii had created the greater part of his series of cityscapes, *Urban Dreams (Gorodskie sny)*, which is devoted to St Petersburg and inspired by Giovanni Piranesi’s *Prisons of Imagination* (1740s and 1760s). His interest in the Empire Style and Petersburg fantasies were nourished by his trip to Italy in 1908. For his cityscapes he adopted Piranesi’s approach to urban surroundings as a conglomeration of stone, brick and iron as well as the impression of a closed space of the city enveloped by evil.²²²

Architectural structures are visible in Dobuzhinskii’s graphic designs: his vignettes, titles and frontispieces are always enriched with “architectural” elements (for example, the frontispiece for *The Golden Fleece*, Fig. 3.12). Dobuzhinskii brought a specific graphic flatness to his designs, so valued by Makovskii, leaving Piranesi’s three-dimensionality aside and preserving it for his cityscapes. His “architectural” drop capitals for *Apollo* (Fig. 4.10; Fig. 4.11) fit the page layout: and the size of the frame repeated the format of the journal in the smaller scale and created an “architectural” composition due to Dobuzhinskii-the-“architect”, who recognized “the anatomy of the entire construction”²²³ of the periodical.

Dobuzhinskii was also commissioned to design the title pages for the sections. Here he demonstrated that polyphony could be achieved by just one

218 Gollerbakh wrote monographs devoted to Natan Al’tman, Voloshin, David Burliuk, Serov, Vrubel’, Ostroumova-Lebedeva, Kuz’ma Petrov-Vodkin, Rerikh and others.

219 Gollerbakh 69.

220 In St Petersburg, the midnight sun usually lasts from May to mid-July.

221 Gollerbakh 64.

222 For a comparison of Dobuzhinskii and Piranesi’s series see, Sally Betsy Moeller, “No Exit: Piranesi, Dore and the Transformation of the Petersburg Myth in Mstislav Dobuzhinskii’s *Urban Dreams*,” *Russian Review* 57 (October 1998): 539–67.

223 Benua, “Zadachi grafiki” 44–45.

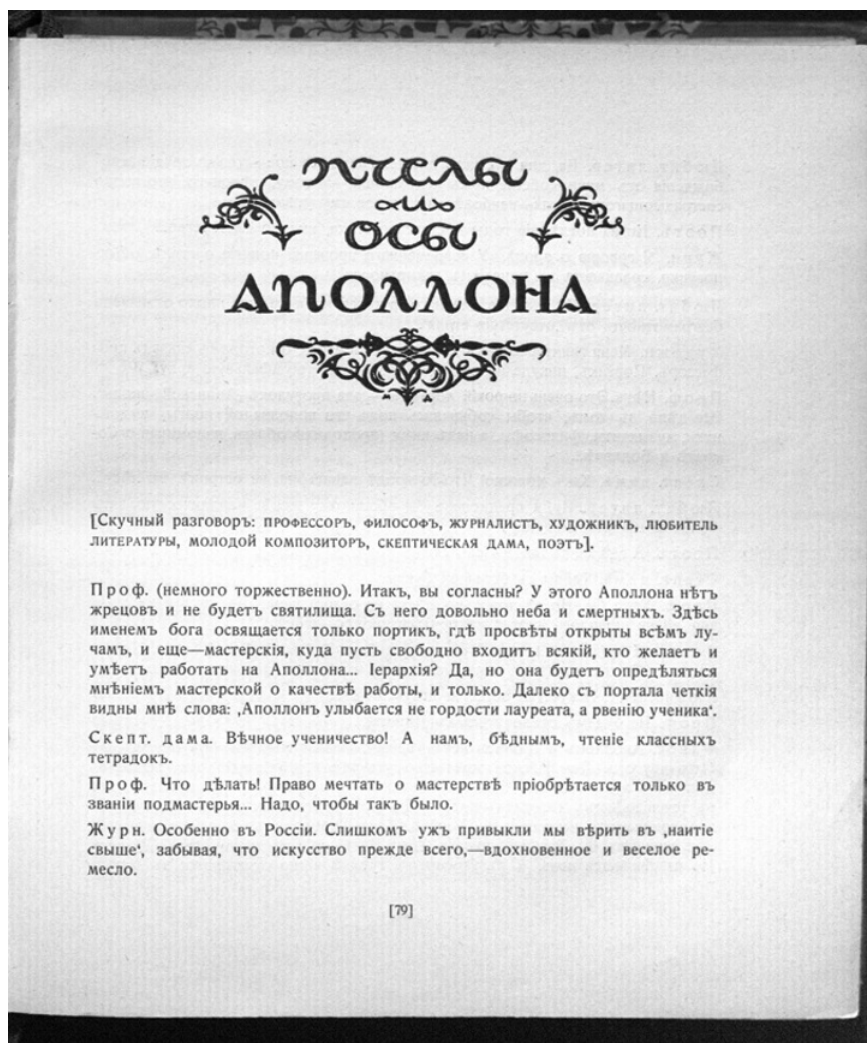


FIGURE 4.12 Mstislav Dobuzhinskii. Title for *The Bees and of Wasps of Apollo* (Pchely i osy Apollona). Apollo (Apollon), no. 1, 1909.

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designer. Thus, the title for “The Bees and Wasps of *Apollo*” appeared quite complex in its visual message (Fig. 4.12). The ornament and font stylistically recalled Middle Eastern, probably Kazakh or Kyrgyz,²²⁴ decorations (the ornamental elements also resembled fleurons and might represent the Rococo revivalist influence so obvious in the *World of Art* and *The Golden Fleece*).

Orientalist motifs were a significant feature of Art Nouveau and had sometimes appeared on the pages of the *World of Art* and *The Golden Fleece*. Dobuzhinskii’s design expressed another “voice” within the meaning of the “conversation” that discussed Apollo and Dionysus. A likely source of inspiration for this section could have come from the literary circle “The Friends of Hafiz” (“Druz’ia Gafiza”), hosted in Ivanov’s apartment in St Petersburg from 1906 to 1907. The circle created its own mythology that was based on the Symbolist “utilization” of Ancient Greek and Middle Eastern symbolism and mythologies and was shrouded in secrecy.²²⁵ It is unknown whether Dobuzhinskii was a regular participant of those meetings (although Somov and Bakst participated regularly); however the growing interest in Muslim poetry and the Russian Orient was widespread at the turn of the century and might therefore have inspired Dobuzhinskii.

Romanticizing the Orient first began in poetry with Pushkin’s famous cycle “Imitation of the Koran” (“Podrazhaniia Koranu”), published in 1828. In the early twentieth century “Quranic” imitations were visible in Ivan Bunin (1870–1953), Bal’mont and Ellis’s poetry, in Gumilev’s poems from 1910,²²⁶ and in the 1920s they appeared in Velimir Khlebnikov (1885–1922) and Sergei Esenin’s (1895–1925) poetic works.²²⁷ Orientalism in artworks appeared later with Vasilii Vereshchagin (1842–1904), who executed a number of paintings devoted to the Orient in the 1860s–1880s. Orientalism was visible in Benois’s and other the *World of Art* artists’ vignettes created around 1900, and in Bakst’s theatrical costume designs. The art of the Blue Rose group expressed strong interest in the Russian Orient, especially in the works of native Armenian Martiros Sar’ian (1880–1972) and Pavel Kuznetsov (1878–1968), both of whom travelled to the East in 1910–13. Sar’ian visited Turkey, Iran, and Egypt in 1910–1913; Kuznetsov travelled to Middle Asia, to the trans-Volga

224 Kyrgyzstan, which is located in Central Asia, has been a part of Russian Empire since 1876.

225 Shrubu 179–180.

226 About Orientalism in Gumilev’s works see E.P. Chudinova, “K voprosu ob orientalizme Nikolaia Gumileva,” *Filologicheskie nauki* 3 (1988): 9–15. The Orientalist poetry by Gumilev was published in *Apollo* 6–7 1917.

227 About Orientalism in Russian poetry see in P.I. Tartakovskii, *Russkaia sovetskaia poeziia zokh – nachala zokh godov i khudozhestvennoe nasledie narodov vostoka* (Tashkent: “Fan” Uzbekskoi SSR, 1977); P.I. Tartakovskii, *Russkie poety i vostok. Bunin, Khlebnikov, Esenin* (Tashkent: Izdatel’stvo literatury i iskusstva im. Gafura Guliyama, 1986).

steppes (today Kyrgyzstan) in 1908–1912, and Bukhara, Tashkent and Samarkand (today Uzbekistan) in 1913.²²⁸

Meanwhile, the letters of the title of the Chronicle section were also decorated in a similar Orientalist Middle-Eastern-style, with a vignette designed by Dobuzhinskii (Fig. 4.8; on the right). This vignette, however, did not refer to Orientalist motifs only. It represented a symmetrical composition with a winged hourglass in the centre: Dobuzhinskii was referring to the ability of time "to fly" (from the Russian idiomatic expression "time flies" [*vremia letit*], which came from Vergil and was known in Latin as "tempus fugit" and also exists in other languages). It could be a visual expression of the word "chronicle", which also refers to time. In reference to the Chronicle section and its meaning, this might imply that the ultimate intention was to present current art events which soon would be forgotten. As presented by Dobuzhinskii, the concept of time was decorated with Rococo-like ornamental elements with a strong reference to architecture.

Illustrations in the Literary Almanac

Dobuzhinskii became the illustrator and graphic designer of the Literary Almanac, a literature section. The title page for the Literary Almanac (Fig. 4.13) represented an antique-style vase with the face of an anthropomorphic Greek deity and a symmetrically arranged bouquet of flowers placed into a hexagonal frame. Stylistically it was akin to the drop capitals and visually expressed classical revival.

The literary section began with two anonymous poems devoted to Apollo, signed with the initial "M." (most likely Makovskii himself), that fully corresponded to the program of the journal. Other poems from the literary section also thematically referred to Hellas and classical revivalism, for example, "The Alexandrian Column" ("Aleksandriiskii stolp") by Bal'mont and "Delos" and "Constellations" ("Sozvezd'ia") by Kuzmin. Neither the classically-inspired poetry nor the disheartening story of a boy titled "Vlas" by the writer Osip Dymov (Iosif Perelman, 1878–1959) were decorated with vignettes or illustration. The only lavishly embellished piece from the literary department was Sergei Auslender's (1886–1937) romantic tale "The Night Prince" ("Nochnoi prints")²²⁹ that completed the issue. It was accompanied by illustrations and a

228 About Sar'ian and Kuznetsov's Orientalist paintings see Chapter IV in A.A. Fedorov-Davydov, *Russkii peizazh kontsa XIX-nachala XX veka* (Moskva: Iskusstvo, 1974). See also Gofman, *Golubaia roza*. *Apollo* published the issues devoted to Sar'ian in 1913 (no. 9) and Kuznetsov's Orientalist art in 1917 (no. 6–7).

229 Sergei Auslender, "Nochnoi prints," *Apollo* 1 (1909): 34–69.

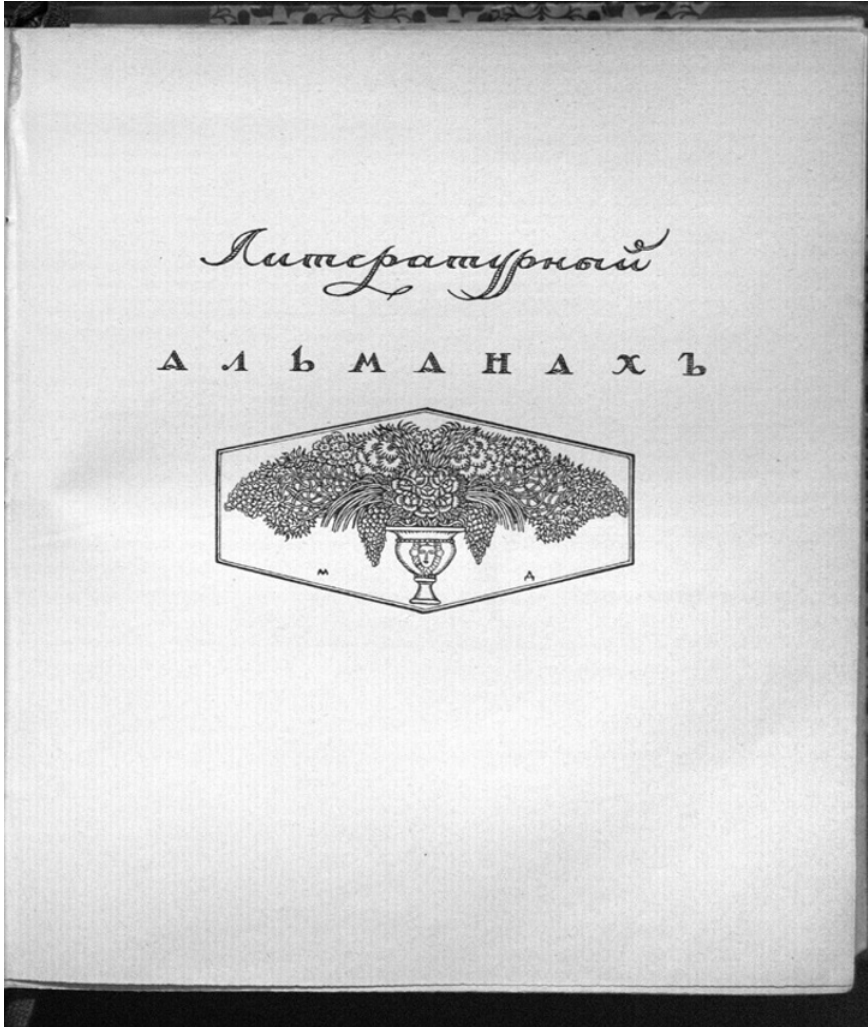


FIGURE 4.13 *Mstislav Dobuzhinskii. Title page for the Literary Almanac. Apollo (Apollon), no. 1, 1909.*
COURTESY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS AT URBANA-CHAMPAIGN LIBRARY.

title page by Dobuzhinskii (Fig. 4.14; Fig. 4.15; Fig. 4.16; Fig. 4.17; Fig. 4.18), who created a detailed illustration for the story; in four full-page illustrations, he reflected the key moments of the tale, creating a correspondence to Auslander's text.

The tale was the story of the erotic visions and recurring dreams of the main teenage protagonist. Eroticism, illusions, devil-like personages, exoticism and



FIGURE 4.14 Mstislav Dobuzhinskii. Title page for Sergei Auslander's story "Night Prince" ("Nochnoi prints"). *Apollo* (Apollon), no. 1, 1909.

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mystery were the main motifs of the tale. All were the embodiments of a typical Russian Modernist narrative with apparent Gogolian (and Hoffmannian) references. The fulfillment of sexual desire was associated with the boy selling his soul to the devil, in addition to a change of identity and acquisition of a new status.

In fact, the "packaging" of the tale was designed as if the designer was crafting an independent book that by chance appeared inside the periodical. With

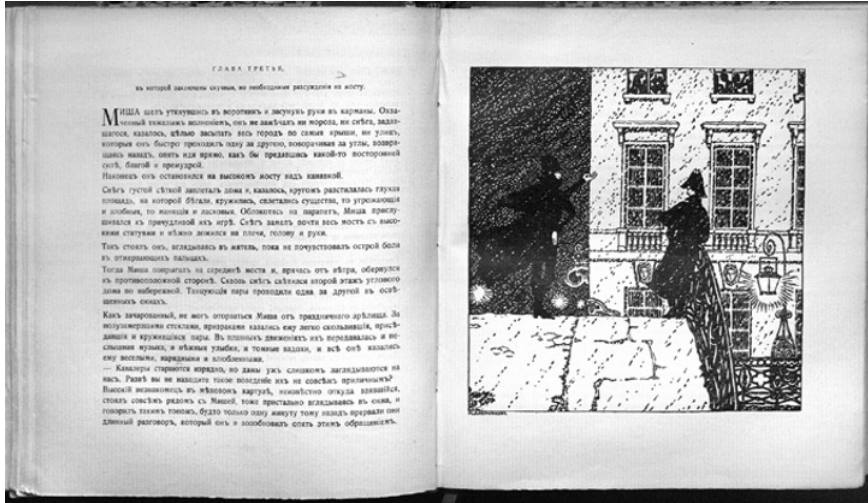


FIGURE 4.15 Mstislav Dobuzhinskii. Illustration for Sergei Auslander's story "Night Prince" ("Nochnoi prints"). *Apollo* (Apollon), no. 1, 1909.

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respect to the interrelations between words and images, it is important to mention that throughout the story the author referred to a painting of a naked female bather²³⁰ hanging on a wall and permanently covered with a curtain, which provoked the main protagonist's sexual desire (Fig. 4.14). The image with the picture of the naked female bather covered with the curtain was placed on the title page of the story to serve as an erotic association with the content and remained the only image referring to eroticism. The four full-page illustrations for the story were arranged as symmetrical compositions and represented a play with stylizations: some images referred to the Empire Style, expressed in the depiction of the Neo-Classical architecture of St Petersburg (Fig. 4.15; Fig. 4.17). However, the general mode of illustrations, as Makovskii described it, was "Hoffmannian Gothic" (for example, Fig. 4.16; Fig. 4.17; Fig. 4.18).

Makovskii believed that Ernst Theodor Amadeus Hoffmann (1776–1822) influenced all the artists of the World of Art: Benois, Somov and Dobuzhinskii were "infected" by the famous Berlin writer. He stated that many writers and poets – such as Blok, Kuzmin, Auslander, Andreev, Sologub, Belyi – and even Vsevolod

230 It might refer to Benois's *The Bath of the Marquise*, 1906 (the version with the nude marquise) that later would be reproduced in *Apollo*, no. 3, 1909.

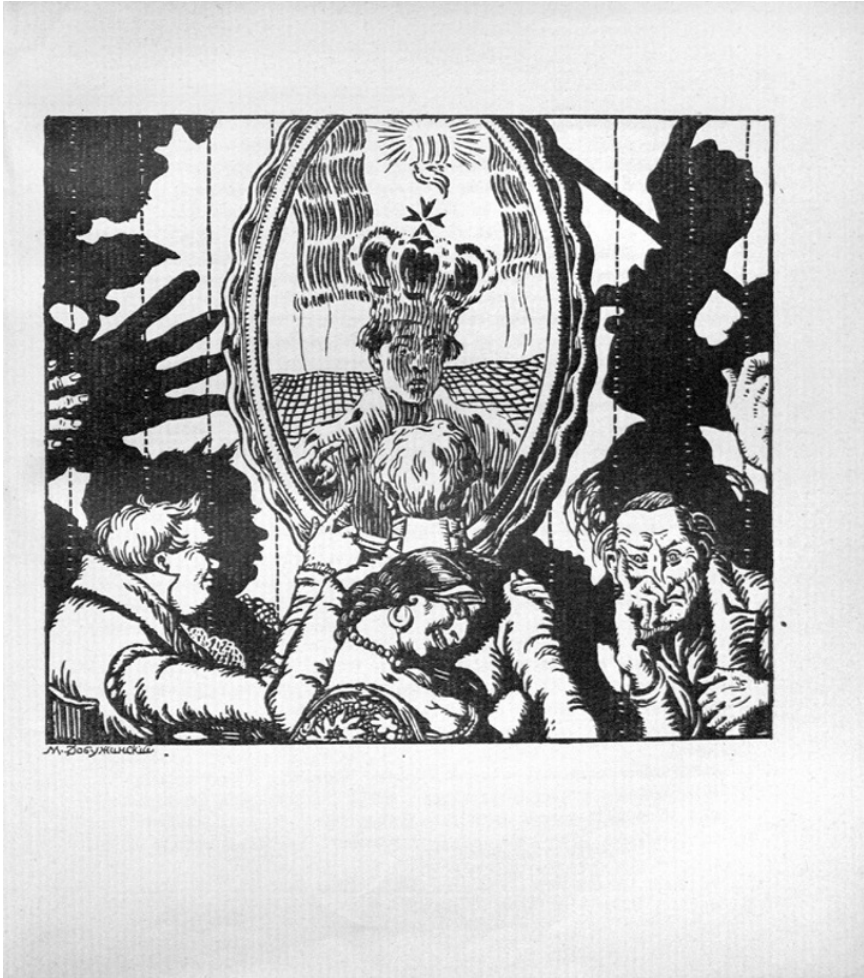


FIGURE 4.16 Mstislav Dobuzhinskii. Illustration for Sergei Auslender's story "Night Prince" ("Nochnoi prints"). *Apollo* (Apollon), no. 1, 1909.

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Meyerhold's "new theatre" gained tremendous impetus from Hoffmann's spirit.²³¹ Makovskii describes Dobuzhinskii's illustrations for "The Night Prince" as a typical Petersburgian "pen-and-ink drawings with clear and firm lines that outline all the contours with some places corrected with gouache and bright opposition of black and white spaces". According to Makovskii, Dobuzhinskii's "composition is free and does not follow any examples, but the stylization with inclination to the grotesque is definitely retrospective as is the entire spirit of Auslender's story".

²³¹ Makovskii, *Grafika Dobuzhinskogo* 22.



FIGURE 4.17 Mstislav Dobuzhinskii. Illustration for Sergei Auslender's story "Night Prince" ("Nochnoi prints"). *Apollo* (Apollon), no. 1, 1909.

COURTESY OF THE UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS AT URBANA-CHAMPAIGN LIBRARY.

The font and the vignette of the title page resemble the so-called *faux-gothique* of Nicholas I's (r. 1825–1855) time²³² (Fig. 4.14).

Dobuzhinskii's illustrations were examples of his "reading" of the story and his "translation" of words into images. Its irony and grotesqueness became visible in his black-and-white illustrations. They did not, however, represent a "parallel text" as did the Symbolist vignettes for *The Golden Fleece* poetry, but functioned in coordination with Auslender's text following its intonation.

232 Makovskii, *Grafika Dobuzhinskogo* 23.



FIGURE 4.18 Mstislav Dobuzhinskii. Illustration for Sergei Auslender's story "Night Prince" ("Nochnoi prints"). *Apollo* (Apollon), no. 1, 1909.

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Thus, in his illustrations Dobuzhinskii demonstrated how the new concept of graphic design articulated by Benois in his "Objectives of Graphic Art" worked in practice.

Conclusion

In terms of its paratextual organization, *Apollo* was conceived as an ideal European journal that articulated the message of a *Gesamtkunstwerk*. Its

materiality and “architectural” presentation embodied the idea of the periodical as an art object in a modest and unassuming way and represented the new conception of graphic design established by Benois in “Objectives of Graphic Art”. It exemplified a move from the Symbolist concept of illustration as a “parallel text” toward the rational concordance of textual and paratextual elements (illustrations) via visual references to the meaning of the texts.

Stylistic hybridity as a significant indicator of early twentieth-century graphic design, nevertheless, was a noteworthy marker of the first issue of *Apollo* as well as of its predecessors. *Apollo*’s stylistic eclecticism, though less flamboyant and extravagant than that of earlier journals, celebrated the best achievements of Russian art periodical culture and graphic design of the early twentieth century.

The new ideology of Apollonianism expressed from the first, inaugural issue, to the final number of *Apollo* was visually supported by the cover and the title page (which was sometimes changed but never contradicted to the journal’s philosophy) and was enhanced by the “architectural” Empire Style drop capitals. The classical revival in both literature and the visual arts occurred in late Imperial Russia in the cultural and social context of an acute interest in archeology, the development of Classical studies, the Nietzschean crisis of knowledge and reevaluation of values, the Symbolist-influenced decadent “fatigue” and the crisis of individualism. While in Diaghilev’s inaugural article for the *World of Art*, individualism was announced as the only correct direction for the arts, ten years later individualism seemed to be considered more like an eccentricity that threatened the further development of art. The unstable social-political situation of the first decade of the twentieth century in the Russian Empire, the workers’ strikes, the revolution of 1905, the Russo-Japanese War of 1904–05 – all these conditions stimulated the desire for an ideology that would unite artists in the hope of a return to tradition in order to oppose the new radical movements. It seems that the Apollonianism established by *Apollo* would serve as this umbrella aesthetical-ideological concept, while the classical revival became its practical fulfillment.

Conclusion

This book explored the three major art periodicals – *World of Art*, *The Golden Fleece* and *Apollo* – all published in late Imperial Russia. It focused on their inaugural issues, which established their aesthetic programs, and analyzed them in their cultural-historical context. These periodicals represented examples of the new paradigm of book design and print revivalism that began in Europe and extended to Russia. They functioned as experimental laboratories of art journalism, graphic design and art reproduction. Each journal embodied a new stage in the vision of word-image intermediality and the idea of the art periodical as an art object.

The *World of Art* started the print revival, introduced Russian readers to the European-type of art periodical and presented European and Russian artworks of the day. Modeled on contemporary European art journals such as *Pan*, *Jugend*, *Simplicissimus*, *The Studio*, *Ver Sacrum* and others, the *World of Art* established future directions for twentieth-century Russian graphic design and launched numerous experiments in this field. The editorial board established the primacy of the journal's materiality, its look as an art object, art reproduction and typographic quality. The principle of "individualism" became the key for the graphic designers of the *World of Art*. The benchmark for all subsequent art journals, the *World of Art* set the standard for Russian graphic design and book production for the following decades.

The Golden Fleece continued the print revival, but embodied a different kind of periodical craftsmanship. The importance of materiality was embraced to a much larger degree than in the *World of Art*. It outdid all previous standards of art periodical materiality in late Imperial Russia and epitomized exquisite and luxurious fine publishing. This ambitious publication initially printed in Russian and French was meant to market Russian art and literature abroad and to the internal market and to compete with the European art periodicals of the day. The graphic design represented the Symbolist idea of illustration and graphic design as a "parallel text". This journal's excesses triggered the next transformative stage of art-periodical culture, the appearance of *Apollo*.

Apollo opposed itself to the luxury and ostentation of *The Golden Fleece*; it was far more modest and visually presented the idea of an "architecture of the book", according to Benois's apt expression. The journal's smaller format, restrained approach to ornamentality, black-and-white graphics and Apollonian clarity of forms celebrated a move away from excessive decoration. According to this new vision, the book and the periodical should represent the concordance of all textual and paratextual elements, where words and images exist in harmony.

All of the journals discussed here appeared in a complex cultural-historical context and expressed the stages of Europeanization of the Russian arts and adaptation of European art theories. The beginning of the development of Russian Modernism was rooted in Russian folklore, the Arts and Crafts movement of Abramtsevo and Talashkino and later in the Art Nouveau interpretations of the “national style” propagated by the *World of Art*. This journal and group’s “historicizing” objectives and engagement with European themes expressed the desire for Europeanization. *The Golden Fleece* established adherence to Symbolist “dream-like” images and the Mallarméan concept of illustration perceived as a “parallel text”. The rationality and “historicism” of the World of Art, however, contrasted to the Symbolist irrational approach; its rational mode appeared dominant in the Russian arts of the early twentieth century.

The World of Art’s rational imagination led to the expansion of the frames of reference to Russian history and contributed to the expansion of the boundaries of Russian “historical” self-understanding. The new vision resulted in the appearance of *Apollo* with its ideology of Apollonianism, the final chord in art periodical publishing before the revolution of 1917. While the flourishing of archeology and Classical studies in Western Europe triggered numerous discoveries and extended European self-imagining, in late Imperial Russia similar processes can be identified as part of the development of Russian imperial self-perception. The roots of Russia’s origin were now “imagined” to be much deeper historically than Kievan (Kyivan) Rus’ or Byzantium.

According to the Modernists of *Apollo*, Antiquity became perceived as a Russian legacy just as much as it was for any other European state or culture. The expanded Russian Imperial “geographical” self-representation re-interpreted the Slavophile (and later Eurasianist) formula that Russia is “between East and West” and transformed it into an Imperial formula that viewed the Russian cultural legacy as extending “from East to West”. In announcing the classical revival, *Apollo* expressed the “cosmopolitan” self-understanding of Russian Modernists. Its realization was achieved through an “archeological” self-perception and the inclusion of Russia into the European archeological metanarrative about the Classical origins of European civilization. Since European identity “included reference to Hellenism, with an idealized ancient Greece as the childhood of Europe”,¹ Russian Modernists, by asserting the terrain of Apollonianism and classical revival, meant to integrate Russia into the European “metanarrative” and herald a Russian affinity for Europeanism on the level of all-European cultural processes. Thus, in pre-revolutionary Russia, the cultural elite – artists, critics and literati – expressed the “cosmopolitan”

1 Leenhardt 76–77.

sense that Russia was an indispensable part of Europe and that her heritage, like that of the rest of Europe, was rooted in Ancient Greece.

Apollo, the last and most long-lived major art periodical of late Imperial Russia, survived the turmoil of World War I, but ceased publication with the Bolshevik revolution of 1917. After the revolution, the development of Russian art periodical culture resumed only in 1919. The early Soviet art periodicals had their own uneasy histories, visions, materiality and word-image intermedialities, which still await their researchers.

The tradition of Russian Modernist art periodicals and fine printing was continued by the short-lived *Russian Art* (*Russkoe iskusstvo*, St Petersburg, 1923) and the émigré *Firebird* (*Zhar-ptitsa*, Berlin, 1921–1925).² *LEF* (*Left Front of Arts* [*Levyi front iskusstv*], Moscow, 1923–1925) and *The New LEF* (*Novyi LEF*, Moscow 1927–1928), the major art journals of the 1920s, continued the opposition to the fine press printing practices of early Futurist books.³ Their publishing aesthetics were in straightforward contrast to *Russian Art* and the émigré *Firebird*; their asceticism was expressed in their use of low-quality, cheap paper, the regular-book format and texts that supported the new regime.

Both “right” and “left” art periodicals of the early 1920s were products of a utopian outlook; the creators of the first dreamed of the lost “world of art”, while the others projected unrealized illusions of the egalitarian world of new industrial aesthetics. Neither group of dreamers, however, had a chance to realize their visions. In 1922, the Association of Artists of Revolutionary Russia (*Assotsiatsiia khudozhnikov revoliutsionnoi Rossii*, 1922–1932) was organized in Moscow. Based on the Wanderers’ traditions, the new Realists fought against “left” and “right” trends and announced a return to representational art that could be understood by everyone. Supported by the Communist Party, the Association initiated the Federation of the Unions of Soviet Artists (*Federatsiia ob”edinenii sovetskikh khudozhnikov*), which established the basis for the announcement of Socialist Realism in 1932. The art journal *Art* (*Iskusstvo*) (Moscow, 1933–1941; 1946–1995; 2002–present) would become the mouthpiece of Socialist Realism as the official art. Very plain and unassuming in terms of graphic design, it would rule the art scene and prescribe official policies on art production, exhibitions and interpretation for several decades. Avant-garde art and literature would be displaced into the underground with *samizdat* (hand-made) publications, whose authors would be banished, persecuted and exiled.

2 For more about the journal see M. Stolbin, “Zhar-Ptitsa,” *Nashe Nasledie* 1 (1989): 150–151.

3 Sergei Isaev, *Lef* (1923–1925). *Novyi Lef* (1927–1928). *Zhurnaly levogo fronta iskusstv. Rospis’ soderzhniia*, ed. N.A. Bogomolov (Velikii Novgorod: Novgorodskii gosudarstvennyi universitet, 2003); Halina Stephan, *“Lef” and the Left Front of the Arts* (Munich: Verlag Otto Sagner, 1981).

The two centuries' long history of the Russian art periodical press and art reproduction is not yet fully studied. This research has aimed to explain only a short, but intense, period of its development. The material specificities of the art press, graphic design, and words and images in their inter-media relations in a historico-cultural context is a developing field, and one which could help our understanding of twentieth- and twenty-first-century media culture. The new technologies and technical progress of the press may eventually lead to the abandonment of the materiality of the book and periodical in favour of e-readers and other electronic devices. The paratextual qualities of such books and periodicals, which take on new forms, also require close attention as graphic design, reproductions and images still compel the readers' response, producing both the meanings of and commentaries on the texts.

Glossary of Terms

Autotype is a printing process in which the metal plate is coated with a light-sensitive resin instead of gelatin.¹

Heliography is a photoengraver's method of fixing images made by the camera obscura; *heliogravure* is a photoengraving or print or plate produced by it.

Linotype machine is a typesetting machine which sets matter or solid lines. It is used generally for newspaper and periodical composition and for books.

Matrix is shallow mold in which the face of a type or image is cast.

Mezzotint is an intaglio process of engraving on copper or steel by first applying a roughened surface with a rocker, a steel chisel whose edge is set with minute teeth and curved so the teeth are rocked into the plate at various angles to produce the desired light and shade effect. A print made by this process is also called mezzotint.

Phototype (or collotype printing) – a type of planographic printing in which a gelatin-coated glass or metal plate is used as a printing surface. It may be used for pictorial catalogues, post cards, view books, art subjects, displays, broadsides, posters, etc. This process is also known as albertype, artotype, heliotype, and Lichtdruck.

Photolithography is the branch of offset lithography in which the printing image or design is created by photography rather than by manual drawing directly on the plate.

Photozincography is the process of making a relief engraving on a zinc plate. The process is similar to photolithography; a photoetching on zinc.

Polytypage (*politipazh*, from French *polytypage* – reproduction du bois gravé par cliché sur une plaque en metal). In this old technique, the drawing was copied from the wood engraving to the metal plate or matrix. *Polytypages* were designed for multiple uses in various editions.

Setting rule is a metal strip used in the hand-setting of type in a composing stick to separate the line being set from the previous one or for decoration of the page on the top or in the bottom.

Xylograph (from Greek) is a term for woodcut; widely used in Russia.

¹ Terms entries (excluding *polytypage*, which is taken from *Reverso: French Definition Dictionary* online at <http://dictionary.reverso.net/french-definition/polytypage>) are based on information from Edward Monington Allen, ed. and comp., *Harper's Dictionary of the Graphic Arts* (New York, Evanston, and London: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1963).

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